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A HISTORY
OF
NEW ENGLAND
THEOLOGY

BY
GEORGE NYE BOARDMAN,
PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY IN
CHICAGO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

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PREFACE.

THE present work had its origin in a series of lectures prepared for an elective course in Chicago Theological Seminary. The division into lectures, however, has not been retained because a treatment more instructive and better proportioned to the importance of the several topics, it is thought, may be secured by presenting the subject in a narrative form. The aim of the present work is to trace the "New Divinity," formerly so called, in its development through the century between 1730 and 1830, through its Berkshire and Hopkinsian eras, to its final form as New England Theology.

It is impossible to determine the dates of the various changes—sometimes spoken of as improvements—which took place in the course of this development, but its beginning and end may be pretty definitely fixed. That which was "new" began with the settlement of Edwards at Northampton, and nothing has been added since the close of the New Haven discussions, that is, since about 1830. The Arminianism of Edwards' day provoked the initial movement. The discussion then awakened, while it called forth the ablest of all the theological essays

produced in America, "Edwards on the Will," has not yet really subsided, though there is no hope that new arguments will be adduced in the case. Nearly contemporaneous was the movement against Pelagianism. The discussion in this case may be said to have reached a conclusion, since the parties passed from debate to an actual separation, in the rupture between the Unitarians and the Orthodox. The theological agitation thus begun, led to a contest among the Calvinists themselves, and opened the way for a vigorous pamphleteering in which Hopkinsianism brought forward its sharpest metaphysical distinctions. These discussions were far-reaching and pervasive in their influence. They excited a popular interest in religious and moral questions, sharpened the intellectual vision of the people, and became an educative force in many parishes of the country. While they did not produce harmony of sentiment, for peace came rather from weariness than conviction, they evinced highly intellectual tendencies among the people, and were very generally looked upon as indicative of their leading traits of character. There can, therefore, hardly be a passage of American history more worthy of study than that before us. It brings to view the inner thinking and serious convictions of some of the best minds the country has produced, it has to do with the most profound and most formative religious agitations through which the country has passed, and it runs parallel with the most important political period of American life.

It is worthy of note that the centuries of New England history are very distinctly marked by theo-

logical tendencies. Puritanism continued as a prevailing force from 1630 to 1730, though it confessed its weakness as early as the middle of that period, by resorting to the half-way covenant. New England theology, as a development, began and finished its career in the succeeding one hundred years. Some of its ablest supporters have appeared since that period, but nothing new has been added. We have passed but two-thirds of the third century, yet it has long been clear that the theologizing temper is still active, and that the more recent movements have been away from Hopkinsianism. Perfectionism, which appeared early after 1830, was a clear, but not very skilfully sustained, protest against the then current Calvinism. A still more vehement protest against it is to be found in Bushnellism, which soon followed, a scheme which has had a decided influence upon some leading minds. A more recent theology having affiliations with evolution now demands a hearing. What it will be when the remaining third of our theological century closes is a matter of conjecture. Our attention is confined to the middle period, except as other periods require incidental notice.

My thanks are due to Rev. Charles R. Gillett, librarian of Union Theological Seminary, for the aid he has rendered in giving me access to historical works, some of them rare, which are under his charge; also to Professor Williston Walker, D.D., of Hartford Theological Seminary, for helpful suggestions, and for access to his notable collection of works on New England history.

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CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY.

I.

SUMMARY STATEMENT.

The term New England Theology has long been in familiar use. It designates a scheme of theology which was developed in this country between 1730 and 1830; attracting attention, brought under discussion, acquiring a fuller and fuller statement from time to time, throughout that century. The movement was begun without a surmise of the path to be traversed, or of the result to be reached. The initial purpose was simply resistance to influences which, it was feared, were leading many astray from the truths of the gospel; but one treatise led to another, critiques led to defences of doctrines for the truth's sake, till finally a large body of theological literature came into existence. It was probably about the year 1760, that the people became aware that a new system of divinity had been devised among them. The names at first applied to it were mildly derisive, "New Light," "New Divinity," "Berkshire Divinity," but its advocates were not confined to Berkshire

County, nor to Massachusetts, and after a few years, "new divinity" ceased to be a term of reproach. The impelling force which prompted and sustained the debate, was the ever impending question, "How shall man's dependence and responsibility be reconciled?" Around whatever theories of Arminianism and Calvinism the contest may have raged, whatever discriminations concerning ability and necessity may have been made, whatever definitions of freedom and bondage may have been devised, still the thing which men desired to know was, how a will under the control of evil, can be required to prefer the good. From this centre the debate ran out, it is true, in many directions, and the topic of fundamental interest was sometimes lost sight of.

While we consider the various phases which this scheme of thought assumed, we should bear in mind that there is an elementary unity underlying them all. These phases, one being prominent at one time, another at another, are many, but there are four which have special designations, and which bring to view the most strenuously contested points that have come under discussion. These are Edwardeanism, Hopkinsianism, Emmonsism and Taylorism. The second and fourth being the most marked. Edwards was engaged in resisting the current of liberal doctrine from 1730, though his strictly controversial works were not published till 1754 and 1758. His name fitly designates the period from 1730 to 1760. It was not popularly applied in this way till after his death. The Hopkinsian period extended from about 1760 to the Revolutionary War, as a period of de-

bate; the epithet is still in use. There was intermission of theological discussion during the struggle for national independence. After the war the doctrine of universal salvation and the doctrine of the atonement excited public interest, but the theological developments of that portion of the century have acquired no distinctive title. Emmonsism was not a product of discussion by parties arrayed against each other. It designates views Hopkinsian in spirit, often suggested by the Hopkinsian discussions, but most clearly announced by Emmons, especially in sermons that excited much attention about the year 1810. Taylorism is a term associated with theological controversies that took place in 1829 and 1830.

It is not to be supposed that, in these several movements, one phase of doctrine gave way to another. Edwardeanism remained, for the most part, a permanent element in New England theology. Some of the doctrines of Hopkinsianism likewise received general approbation, but some of them were strongly opposed by persons who still adhered to what was known as the New Divinity. Emmonsism is not an essential part of this scheme of doctrine so much as it is a method of apprehending some of its accepted teachings. The popular sentiment concerning Taylorism is not yet perfectly definite.

New England Theology was not popular at the beginning. Hopkins writes in 1796: "About forty years ago there were but few, perhaps not more than four or five, who espoused the sentiments which since have been called Edwardean and New Divinity, and since some improvement was made upon them Hop-

kintonian or Hopkinsian. But these sentiments have so spread since that time among ministers, especially those who have since come upon the stage, that there are now more than a hundred in the ministry who espouse the same sentiments in the United States of America. And the number seems to be fast increasing, and these sentiments seem to be coming more and more into credit, and are better understood, and the odium which was cast upon them, and those who preached them is greatly subsided.”¹ This theology continued to enlarge its power and influence after Hopkins’ day. He probably never heard the term Emmonsism, certainly knew nothing of Taylorism. Its growth, however, was not a symmetrical development, but was rather like the growth of a cactus, by means of branches thrust out here and there from the parent stock. The periods more marked by earnest, sometimes sharp debate, were the fifteen years between 1760 and 1775, and a few years following 1826, the echoes of the later contention being heard as late as 1837. Still it made constant progress and was felt as a power through the century already designated, and that not only in the Eastern States, but through all the Northern States of the Union, and was received with a cordial welcome in parts of England and Scotland.

The increasing and continued popularity of this scheme of doctrine was due to the character of its adherents as much as to its inherent merit. It became an aggressive force. It was in accord with the spirit of the age. It is not improbable that its opponents have always been more numerous in New England

1. Works, Edition of 1852, I, 238, Memoir.

than its advocates, but it absorbed the theological impulses of the time; those who resisted it acted, for the most part, on the defensive; the Hopkinsian *esprit de corps* was the current theological spirit. The new divinity men were active in reforms, made use of the press to disseminate their ideas, and were successful in forming organizations which should modify and utilize public opinion. Especially in the period of polemic and political ferment in the latter half of the last century was the spirit of the new divinity men in sympathy with the popular drift of thought.

Hopkins was pastor at Great Barrington twenty-five years. This was the quarter of the century in which the French and Indian War occurred. He was pastor at Newport, R. I., thirty-three years from 1770. The first thirteen years of this pastorate were years of commotion, because of the conflict between the Colonies and England, culminating in the War of the Revolution. He was a decided patriot, as were most of his theological associates. In their speculations, they partook of the spirit of the times. Individual independence was in the air. It came near wrecking the colonial cause. It gave variant statements to Christian doctrines. Hopkins assures us that while Edwards was a Calvinist, he called no man master, and was much of an original. He is himself careful to give his readers to understand, that, while he agreed for the most part with Edwards, he was not afraid to dissent from his teachings. Dr. Stephen West wrote on moral agency: he was a disciple of Hopkins and an admirer of Edwards, but claims to have

elaborated his own system, and to have noticed some errors in Edwards. Smalley wrote the work on natural and moral ability to which is conceded the first place among essays on that topic, yet he ridiculed some of the views of both Edwards and Emmons. Emmons was, by common consent, the boldest thinker and writer in the entire school, while Taylorism has in many minds obscured or displaced Hopkinsianism. New England Theology was thus built up by the co-operation of independent minds working each from a personal impulse, which was yet a part of the general impulse by which the community was moved.

Where there is so much of individuality and independence there is danger that these qualities will degenerate to a mere ridiculous pretence, but there was no such result in the case before us. The number of writers and preachers of note between Edwards and Taylor is really a matter of wonder. Probably twenty-five might be named in the small territory of New England who would be called distinguished men, and more than twice that number could have been found who would have been good theological teachers. Some of them were men of great acuteness and some of original power as thinkers. In proof of this, we have only now to refer, in addition to names already mentioned, to Bellamy, Dwight, Spring and Griffin.

We have already reached a point where the relation of theological parties in New England comes to view, and it is well to have them in mind from the first. The great division is into Calvinists and Anti-Calvinists. But each of these parties is to be sub-divided. The Anti-Calvinists are made up of

Pelagians and Arminians. The Pelagians are rationalists and naturally drift into Unitarianism. The term Arminian now suggests the Methodists, but the Arminians of Edwards' day were the Liberals, whose natural successors are to be found to some extent among the Unitarians, still more among the Methodists, and in goodly numbers among Orthodox Congregationalists. The Calvinists also fall into two parties: the "Old Divinity" men and the "New Divinity" men. The Old Divinity men are sometimes called "Old Calvinists;" a better designation is "Moderate Calvinists." Some of their views resembled those of early Arminians. The New Divinity men were known as Hopkinsians. They often called themselves "Consistent Calvinists." Their theology is the "New England Theology." Their most strenuous contentions, which will be noticed hereafter, were in opposition to Moderate or Old Calvinism.

II.

THE RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF NEW ENGLAND
IN 1730.

The rise of New England Theology was contemporaneous with the great revival. The country was prepared for theological investigation as well as susceptible of religious excitement. Christian people had become alarmed over the lax state of public morals, and the public mind was deliberating upon the comparative worth of a liberal and a strict scheme of doctrine. These two points are worthy of notice, as preparatory to a study of the topic before us.

1. THE LAX STATE OF MORALS.

It seems a defiance of natural development, and a mockery of human purposes, that the model Christian Commonwealth of the Puritans should fall into gross immoralities. That a century of experience under the domination of the strictest rules of righteousness should result in social vices and disorders, almost leads us to despair of the final prevalence of virtue. The Puritans came to this country to Christianize America, within a century they found that they were, to use their own language, in danger of being themselves paganized.

We may leave out of the account the Plymouth Colony, in considering this topic, since it did not number more than three hundred souls in 1630, when immigrants were flocking into Salem and Boston by thousands. The Massachusetts Colony did not consider itself under obligation to share its privileges with every one who might choose to settle among them, but held it to be a duty to limit the society to congenial members. Accordingly, in 1631 the General Court adopted the following:

“To the end the body of the Commons may be preserved of honest and good men, it is likewise ordered and agreed that for time to come, no man shall be admitted to the freedom of the body politic, but such as are members of some of the churches within the limits of the same.”

Palfrey, in his *History of New England*, says this ordinance was passed: “at the first cisatlantic General Court for election,” and comments on it thus:

"They established a kind of aristocracy hitherto unknown. Not birth, nor wealth, nor learning, nor skill in war, was to confer political power, but personal character,—goodness of the highest type,—goodness of that purity and force which only the faith of Jesus Christ is competent to create."¹

He says also:

"The freemen of the Massachusetts Company had a right in equity and in law, to expel from their territory all persons who should give them trouble. In their corporate capacity, they were owners of Massachusetts in fee, by a title to all intents as good as that by which any freeholder among them had held his English farm."²

For a time the community maintained a very high moral position. Religion was a part of their business, and business was a religious exercise. They provided for attendance at church, as they did for their daily meals and household comforts, as among the necessities of life. Inns and houses of public resort were not permitted to harbor those able to go to meeting, during the time of the week-day lecture; violations of the Sabbath were made penal offences. Actuated by these principles and armed with these powers, they were able during the life of the first immigrants effectually to repress open vices. They could expel Antinomians and Quakers. They could repress witchcraft and maintain a homogeneous society. But Puritans could not hang or banish their own children, though they should be born in a state of total depravity. Puritan dominion did not change the

1. I, 345.

2. I, 387.

natural tendencies of humanity. The young people would have their sports. Parents could not avoid excusing, if they did not approve, the innocent amusements of the young, and it was impossible then, as it ever is, to draw the line between the innocent and the mischievous. There can be no doubt that the public morals became considerably relaxed within twenty years after the first Puritan landing at Salem, and within thirty years real alarm was excited in the minds of those who had watched the progress of events from the beginning.

There were other causes than the drift of human nature which served to roughen, if not corrupt, the manners and morals of the people. It was early noticed that there was a "hankering for more land" among the inhabitants. The population was continually reaching out for new and larger possessions. In 1636, Rev. Thomas Hooker and his church emigrated from Newtown to Hartford. Settlements were early made along the Connecticut River, and then on the Deerfield River. It has been said that "emigration tends to barbarism;" it must suppress many of the conventionalities and social amenities of life. Although the Puritans were scrupulous in their care for the institutions of learning and religion, they could not secure among the young, through all their scattered homes, the taste and polished manners that belong to established and well ordered social life.

A still more disturbing influence than that of emigration is to be found in the internal commotions and external dangers of the period. It is difficult for us to form an idea of the turmoils that beset the

early inhabitants of New England. The Indian raids upon the colonies, the contentions between France and England, the war of the Revolution, together make its history one of incessant dangers and struggles. The thoughts of the young were early turned towards border warfare. The care of those in mature life was often for the safety of their families. As early as 1636 and 1637, the struggle known as the Pequot war occupied the attention of Connecticut and Massachusetts. In 1643, a union of the colonies was effected for the purposes of defence against the Dutch, the French and the Indians. The bloody and destructive contention, known as King Phillip's war, which decimated the population, continued from 1675 to 1678. Following these struggles with the native population, King William's war, Queen Anne's war, King George's War, the French and Indian War, filled three-quarters of a century with the terrors and horrors that have made all readers of history shudder at the names of Brookfield, Bloody Brook, Dover, Wells and Deerfield. In truth, bloodshed, torture, scalping, imprisonments, made the years of New England colonization one long tragedy.

Under such influences, the moral condition of the country sank to a lower and lower level. The deterioration was early felt, and before a half century had passed, called forth profound sorrow and lamentation. Increase Mather in 1678, said:

"The body of the rising generation is a poor, perishing, unconverted and (except the Lord pour down his spirit) undone generation!"¹

1. Dexter's Congregationalism in its Literature, 476.

“The Reforming Synod” convened in 1679, thus enumerates the judgments by which God was afflicting the country because of its sins.

“Heavy calamities by sea and shore, shipwrecks, droughts, conflagrations, fightings, pestilential sicknesses, and commercial disasters. These evils are considered as punishments for abounding pride, neglect of church-fellowship and other divine institutions, oaths and imprecations in ordinary discourse, Sabbath-breaking, remissness in family government and family worship, intemperance, promise-breaking, immodest dress and mixed dancing.”¹

The evils here complained of continued and increased through the century, and for thirty or more years in the following century. Edwards was unsparing in his denunciation of the evil habits prevalent at Northampton. He preached against night-walking, gaming, company-keeping, tavern-haunting, midnight frolics.

When Edwards began preaching in Northampton in 1727, the question had been before New England for seventy years; What can be done to arrest the decay of morals and to Christianize the community? The original plan had been to make New England a paradise by establishing a strictly regenerate church-membership. The result had been to deplete the church and paganize the English population. The children of church members were baptized in infancy, but if not converted were not admitted to the church, and *their* children were not baptized. Many of the second generation of American birth had, therefore,

1. Palfrey's New England, III, 331.

no connection of any kind with the churches. The case excited anxiety and alarm very early. In 1657, before the colony was thirty years old, the Massachusetts Court called together thirteen teaching elders to advise upon the matter. Four delegates from Connecticut joined in their deliberations. After a fortnight's discussion, the conference proposed a partial return to the old world method of constituting church membership. It proposed that those who had been baptized should own the covenant, though unregenerate, and then have their children baptized. Thus a connection with the church could be made general. It was argued by some, that the children of those who had been baptized were already church-members, baptism, as a sealing ordinance, being simply the recognition of an existing fact. It was hence inferred that the descendants of a remote baptized ancestor might be baptized. This idea was sometimes, probably not often, actually adopted in practice. This scheme was called the half-way covenant. It did not at once meet with favor, but was sustained by the feeling that something must be done, was urgently commended by a larger Synod in 1662, and, though still strenuously opposed by some of the ablest of the ministry, finally met with general acquiescence, and was extensively adopted as a Christian ordinance. Those connected with the church through the half-way covenant, were not expected to partake of the Lord's Supper, yet there were those who opposed regenerate church-membership, and admitted to full communion any who accepted the Christian doctrines and lived reputable and upright lives. They held

that the Sacrament of the Supper was a converting ordinance. Notably Solomon Stoddard of Northampton, grand-father of President Edwards, advocated this view. But, whatever may have been the effect of the half-way covenant, and whatever may be the advantages of hereditary church membership in the old world, in 1730, something more radical and thorough-going was demanded for the restoration of an elevated and pervasive religious life in America. There was needed a counteracting force which should eradicate the worldliness of those whose thoughts had been much engrossed in the preparation of homes in a new country; there was needed some power that should be more impressive and awe-inspiring than the military and predatory movements that had agitated the community. There was needed some popular movement that should impress men with the dignity of the divine side of man's nature and of his responsibility to God. This was found in the great revival of 1740. The half-way covenant, on the other hand, was considered by the most earnest promoters of that revival to be a hindrance to the progress of religion, and has, though for a time earnestly defended, gradually fallen into disuse.

2. LAXITY IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE. This accompanied laxity in morals.

New England Theology was a new and definite statement of Calvinism. It claimed to be an improved and defensible statement, and at times assumed the designation "Consistent Calvinism." This was the resultant. At first it simply aimed to tone up the beliefs of the churches. Cold and barren relig-

ious sentiments had taken possession of many minds before the great revival, and earnest Christian teachers felt called upon to resist the downward tendency. The occasion for this spirit of reform is easily accounted for. The influence of the Non-Conformists of England, who had already drifted towards or into Unitarianism, was strongly felt in this country, and called forth determined antagonism.

There was constant intercourse between the American settlements and the old home. It was natural that the people here should look thither for guidance, that the intellectual and moral forces operative there should be early and deeply felt here. It may be assumed that the thinkers, the men whose published works stirred the intellect of the age would, if known in England, have also much influence on the scholars this side of the Atlantic. The array of giant thinkers who appeared at just the time to exert a powerful influence upon English and American students in the first half of the 18th century, is marvellous. Besides the philosophers Hobbes, Locke, Spinoza, Malebranche, Leibnitz and others, there were the free-thinkers, known as the English Deists, Tindal, Woolston, Morgan, Collins and Bolingbroke. Such men sway the thinking of an age, their power is felt even by those who do not know them by name. Not one of these men wakened warm religious feelings in the minds of those who came under their power, the tendency of their teaching was to skeptical and rationalistic speculations. Many English theologians fell in with the spirit of the age and communicated their sentiments to their brethren across the sea.

Another powerful motive to intellectual activity, suggestive too of doubts as to the Christian faith, was found in the study of nature, which received a fresh impetus from the investigations of Boyle, Newton, and other representatives of the Royal Society. It is worthy of notice that the discoveries of Newton stirred deeply the intellect and imagination of Edwards, though he early adopted theology as his theme of study.

We are now concerned, however, more specially with the theological tendencies of the age. There was much to favor liberal views, much to favor fatalism, little to favor orthodox Calvinism. The advocates of Arminian freedom of will claimed that they were supported by the religious thinking of the time, and denounced Calvinism as in harmony with the views of Hobbes and Collins. Anti-trinitarian views in former times, as in the present century, have grown out of a liberal theology, and Milton, Locke, Newton and Clarke were classed as opponents of the doctrine of the Trinity. Watt's view of the Son of God had its influence in this country, and was controverted by Edwards. Thus there was during the early part of the eighteenth century a deep, broad and strong current of sentiment tending towards liberalism, or more properly rationalism and Unitarianism.

A book that had much influence in this country, though not directly calling out the Edwardean and Hopkinsian discussions, was that of Thomas Emlyn, entitled "An Humble Inquiry into the Scripture Account of Jesus Christ; or a Short Argument Con-

cerning His Deity and Glory, According to the Gospel." Emlyn was born in 1663, died in 1741. In 1691 he became colleague pastor with a Mr. Boyce over a dissenting congregation in Dublin. He became unsettled in his theological views from reading Sherlock's treatise on the Trinity. He said in 1697 that he probably could not retain his place as pastor if he should disclose his sentiments on that topic. He was dismissed from his church by a meeting of ministers in 1702. He considered that his dismissal put him under the necessity of publishing his views, which he did the same year. He was thereupon indicted by a jury, charged with having published an infamous and scandalous libel, "That Jesus Christ is not equal to God the Father." He was tried, convicted, sentenced to fine and imprisonment. He argued that Jesus Christ has a God above him, and that, therefore, he is not the Supreme God. He held, however, that an inferior religious worship of him is not only allowed but required by the Scriptures. He discarded the view that Christ's sufferings are an equivalent compensation to vindictive justice for the sins of men, but taught that "he, by his obedience unto death, made so acceptable and rewardable an oblation unto God, that in consideration thereof he is exalted to be a princely advocate with a merciful God, and his intercession prevalent for pardon which he is authorized to grant."

These sentiments were, in fact, the Unitarian leaven which worked among the clergy of Eastern Massachusetts, confessedly with effect upon Experience Mayhew, and doubtless with still greater effect upon

his son, Jonathan Mayhew, and upon Lemuel Brient. The last two made much of teaching moral duties, paid little attention to the creed. The effect of Emlyn's work, which was republished in Boston as late as 1756, excited the fears of Edwards though he did not bring it under discussion in his controversial writings.

William Whiston (1667-1752) was a man of much learning and a voluminous writer. He was in earlier life a friend of Sir Isaac Newton and succeeded him in the Lucasian professorship at Cambridge about the year 1700. He began to entertain doubts concerning the Trinity as early as 1706, and in 1710 was dismissed from his professorship for heresy. He published his "Primitive Christianity Revived" (4 volumes) in 1711. Other works opposed to the Trinity and in favor of the canonicity of certain apocryphal books of the New Testament followed. He held that there is one original fountain of being, one God, the Father. He held to the three divine persons, but that the Father is the only true God in the highest sense of the word, the only being possessed of absolutely infinite attributes and perfections. He did not consider the Son and the Spirit as subordinate creatures, but subordinate persons, to whom neither the Scriptures nor the primitive Christian writings attribute absolute equality with the Father. He was considered an Arian, or more properly a Semi-Arian. His writings were known in this country and exerted no inconsiderable influence, yet his later life was such as to detract somewhat from the estimate in which he was held. In 1747 he left the established church and joined the Arminian Baptists.

The name of John Taylor, of Norwich, has been more familiarly known in New England than that of any other of the heretical English writers of his day. His work on "Original Sin" furnished Edwards a very convenient statement of Pelagian doctrine in his assault upon that system. Taylor's writings are clear, plausible, attractive in form, and well adapted to popular use. Edwards' careful, extended and overwhelming replies to his arguments give them a dignity which they do not possess in themselves. Taylor seems desirous of turning attention from himself and appeals to the Scriptures as the only authority. In his work entitled "Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin Proposed to Free and Candid Examination," he says:

"I warrant nothing of my own in the present inquiries. I undertake to make nothing good, the Scriptures are the rule of faith."

In dedicating to the people of his charge his Paraphrase of Romans, he says:

"It is the design of this essay, setting aside all human schemes, and my own imagination, to give you the true scheme of Christianity, collected immediately from that pure fountain, (Scripture), carefully comparing one part with another, that your faith, hope and joy may stand not upon the wisdom of man, but upon the firm and immovable foundation of the word of God."

His views of original sin and of the atonement do not differ from those of the early Unitarians of this country, and need not be noticed at large. He

traced all sin to an evil will; held that necessary sin is no sin; that men are not by nature indisposed to all good; that regeneration is acquiring habits of virtue and religion; that God is just in inflicting death upon men because it is made a benefit; that we receive from Christ abounding blessings which more than compensate for Adam's sin; that even now, if all influences were favorable, our circumstances would be preferable to those in which Adam was placed. He put all moral qualities in individual action, and held that the doctrine of original righteousness is as great an error as that of original sin.

Daniel Whitby, whose writings exerted a considerable influence in this country, first in favor of Arminianism, afterwards in favor of Unitarianism, was born in Northamptonshire, England, in 1638. He became a commoner at Trinity College, Oxford, in 1653. He became a Perpetual Fellow at the age of twenty-four. He was appointed Rector of St. Edmund's Church, Salisbury, in 1672, and Prebendary of Taunton Regis in 1696. He died March 24, 1726. He was a voluminous writer. His work best known in this country is that on the Five Points of Calvinism. The work considered most valuable is, "A Paraphrase and Commentary on the New Testament," published in 1703. He says of himself that he was seven years under Calvinistical teaching; that he found escape from such doctrines as the imputation of Adam's sin by reading the works of Joshua Placæus; and later by study of the scriptures, found that they did not teach election and reprobation. His first published writings were directed against Romanism

of which he was a strenuous opponent. He was known as an Arminian, and says if any condemn him for his views while adhering to the Church of England, almost all the bishops and the great body of the clergy must be condemned with him.

At a later day he began to question the doctrine of the Trinity, and finally became an Arian. In 1714, he preached a sermon in which he maintained that nothing ought to be admitted as an article of faith, which is repugnant to the common principles of reason. The same year he published a small book, entitled, "Dissuasives from Inquiring into the Doctrine of the Trinity; or the Difficulties and Discouragements which attend the Study of that Doctrine." In speaking of Christ, he says:

"This must be the very person promised to the Jews in the Old Testament, and so must have a true dominion from the Supreme Author of all dominion; and so be *verus Deus*, truly God, though not *summus Deus*, the Supreme God, or God Most High."¹

Several of his works were controversial, written in refutation of the positions of Bull and Waterland.

It is clear then that in 1730 Calvinism was suffering an eclipse. The theological views of the people had, in many cases swerved much from the old standard. Both Puritans and Separatists had been Calvinistic in their sentiments. John Robinson did good service in Holland in opposition to Arminianism; the Cambridge Synod of 1648 eulogized the Westminster Confession as holy, orthodox and

1. Last Thoughts, p. 65.

judicious in matters of faith; the Boston Synod of 1680 adopted the Savoy Confession of 1653, which is the equivalent of the Westminster, in doctrine; the Saybrook Synod of 1708, did the same. Samuel Willard, M.A., Vice-president of Harvard College, gave a series of monthly lectures in Boston, on the Assembly's Shorter Catechism. The lectures were strictly Calvinistic. They extended from 1688 to 1707. But Calvinism was early the object of attack in New England. Charles Francis Adams claims that Quincy, the North Precinct of Braintree, was always liberal, that the people never accepted Calvinism, or strong orthodoxy. He says also, when New England Unitarianism assumed shape, and Channing foreshadowed Parker,

“John Adams, discussing in 1815, the principles of the new departure, found in them nothing that was not familiarly known to him, and bore testimony to the fact that sixty-five years before, Lemuel Briant was a Unitarian.¹

Briant was pastor of the church in Quincy from 1745 to 1753, and was charged by his contemporary ministers with being an Arminian and a Socinian. Rev. Experience Mayhew, who published his “Grace Defended” in 1744, says in his preface, that he is a Calvinist, but that he is in the habit of reading Arminian books, and has been led to see that Calvinism labors under some difficulties.

Mayhew represented a class of Calvinists known as *Old Calvinists* or *Moderate Calvinists*. There is a

1. Three Episodes in Mass. Hist., pp. 638, 642, 944.

view of election and divine sovereignty which fosters the idea that the impenitent may await God's time for their conversion. They are to avail themselves of the means of grace, such as attendance upon public worship, prayer and the reading of the Scriptures, and to live in the expectation that God will, when the appointed time comes, work upon them with regenerating power. This view was cherished by the half-way covenant and by Stoddardism. The view that the Lord's Supper as well as baptism, is a means of grace for the impenitent, has been extensively held, is by many theologians firmly maintained at this day. Dr. Hopkins, in his life of Edwards, says:

"Stoddard's principles spread among the people of the country and other parts of New England, though no church except Northampton, publicly and professedly acted on this principle by altering the profession that those made who were admitted to the Sacrament, to suit it to such a notion."¹

The State of the Churches in the Northern Colonies before the Great Awakening, has often been spoken of as adherence to "a low Arminianism." At the present time, Arminian is a term associated with Methodism, and so with religious zeal, pointed preaching and revivals, but there was no Methodism at that time in this country, and the term seems to have been used to designate any kind of laxity and indifference in Christian life. Mr. Mills, in his discussion with Hopkins, speaks of those as Arminians who held that regeneration takes place at or by

1. p. 61.

baptism.¹ Trumbull, in his History of Connecticut, speaking of certain religious movements in that state says:

“Every measure appears to have been taken to suppress the zealous, experimental preachers and people, both by the legislature and the leaders among the clergy. Numbers of them were Arminians, preachers of a dead, cold morality, without any distinction of it from heathen morality, by the principles of evangelical love and faith. Experimental religion, and zeal and engagedness in preaching and in serving God, were termed enthusiasm.”²

In another place he says:

“The assembly manifested their zeal to suppress the new lights, as the zealous Calvinistic ministers and people were then called.”³

It seems, therefore, that the low Arminianism of 1730 included, or was thought of as including, the low Calvinism of the day, and whatever was opposed to an immediate and urgent pressing into the Kingdom of God.

III.

THE OCCASION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW ENGLAND THEOLOGY.

It is impossible to give exact date to the rise of New England Theology, but a division of the ministry into parties which became, to some extent, coincident with the division between “old lights” and “new lights,” was occasioned by the great revival of

1. p. 45.

2. II, p. 176.

3. II, p. 232.

1740. Professor Park, once said to his class, that he should say this theology began with Edwards' treatise on Virtue. This essay was not published till 1765, seven years after the death of Edwards, but it was read to Hopkins and Bellamy by Edwards himself. It was, therefore, before the minds of the new divinity leaders before their speculations were made public. And it is well-known that the views presented in the treatise, with other of his theological sentiments, were entertained by Edwards while he was still a student in New Haven. The germs of the system were probably in his mind while he was reading Locke and making philosophical notes as a student in Yale College. But we need not trace the system so far back, it was developed as a practical scheme; theories followed after. It was in the great revival of 1740 that the religious conservatism and the religious aggression of New England came into collision. The primal, eminently aggressive force was Jonathan Edwards. He was a man of intense, fervent energy. He is known as a man of many resolutions, of which the sixth, written before he was nineteen years old, was: "To live with all my might while I do live." He considered that the salvation of the soul was to be sought at once, persistently and with unceasing energy. He says of himself, while still in college, from which he graduated at the age of seventeen:

"I made seeking my salvation the main business of my life. But yet, it seems to me, I sought it after a miserable manner, which has made me sometimes since question whether ever it issued in that

which is saving, being ready to doubt whether such miserable seeking ever succeeded."

Such sentiments were much at variance with the prevalent ideas of the churches. As we have noticed, it was to a large extent at least, thought that the impenitent should put themselves under the influence of the means of grace and wait God's time for their conversion. Out of this readily grew the idea, that if one lived a moral life and attended diligently on the means of grace, he had performed his whole duty and might be considered as in the way of salvation. These conservative sentiments were perhaps nowhere more firmly held than at Northampton, where Edwards was settled in 1727 as colleague pastor with his grand-father, Solomon Stoddard. Stoddard admitted to the Lord's Supper those confessedly unregenerate. Without definitely antagonizing his grand-father's teachings, probably even in thought, he was called upon early in his ministry to urge his hearers to action in the work of their salvation. After five years of pastoral labor, he noticed changes for the better in the church and parish. There was more than usual attention and inquiry in the congregations which he addressed. The seriousness of the people gradually deepened till, at the beginning of 1735, he was in the midst of a remarkable revival of religion. In the course of six months about three hundred persons were hopefully converted. The churches in more than twenty neighboring towns, some of them in Connecticut, have been mentioned as awakened to new religious activity by the movement at Northampton. In this revival,

Edwards preached sermons prompting his hearers to immediate action; sermons bearing the titles, "Pressing into the Kingdom of God;" "Ruth's Resolution," "The Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners." He also preached boldly against the heresies of the day, assailing the Arminianism that had largely taken possession of the churches. His discourses on "Justification by Faith," affirming our dependence on the righteousness of Christ, acquired much notoriety.

So strong was the Arminian tendency in the region about Northampton that he was advised by his friends not to antagonize it, specially not to commit himself in opposition to it by publishing his sermons on justification. His failure to follow the advice cost him the friendship of influential families, but he considered his peculiar Calvinistic preaching a source of great power in the revival, and it may be assumed that at this point New England Theology began to make itself felt. His assault upon Arminianism must have been substantially the same as that made by the treatise on the will, as Paul's preaching as reported in the Acts, foreshadowed the Epistle to the Romans. Edwards' biographer, Sereno E. Dwight, D. D., says in reference to the revival of 1735:

"Early in the progress of this work of grace, Mr. Edwards seems to have decided for himself the manner in which he was bound to treat awakened sinners; to urge repentance on every such sinner, as his immediate duty; to insist that God is under no manner of obligation to any unrenewed man; and

that a man can challenge nothing, either in absolute justice, or by free promise, on account of anything he does before he repents and believes."

It may be thought that Dr. Dwight reads New England theology into Edwards' method of work, but many expressions of Edwards might be cited at least partially confirmatory of these statements. He says to a young friend in answer to certain inquiries:

"I would advise you to keep up as great a strife and earnestness in religion as if you knew yourself to be in a state of nature and were seeking conversion. We advise persons under conviction to be earnest and violent for the kingdom of heaven."

The revival of 1735 was of brief duration. Before the close of the year the religious interest had abated, but the party lines disclosed by it were not obliterated. Indeed it was thought that theological differences had diverted the minds of the people from personal religion and arrested the progress of the good work. The same division of parties into "old lights" and "new lights"—those who would wait for the effect of the means of grace, and those who would take the kingdom of God by violence—was disclosed and intensified by the great and general revival of 1740. In this revival the attention of the people of New England was turned to the subject of religion as at no other time in its history. It continued about two years, and those who entered on the new life were numbered by thousands; some have made the number twenty-five, some fifty thousand. Edwards considered the work at the begin-

ning purer and more spiritual than that of 1735, but in the end it was marred by sad excesses. In 1740, in September, Whitefield came to Boston and preached with great power and to the great satisfaction of most of the people. A few criticised him sharply, and some spoke of him with a good deal of contempt. He went as far East as York, Maine, and left New England by way of Northampton, the Connecticut Valley and New Haven. Wherever he stopped, even for a few hours, he preached to immense audiences, and with marked effect. He remained in New England about five weeks. In December of the same year Gilbert Tennent came to Boston where he spent the winter, till March, 1741, in evangelistic work. In the spring of that year he preached in many places in Connecticut. At the same time many pastors of churches, among them Edwards and Bellamy, preached as itinerants, being invited to various towns. Later some persons, prominently James Davenport, gave themselves up to itinerant work. Preaching of this kind, though opposed by civil authority in Connecticut, and by several ecclesiastical associations, continued into 1743.

The history of this Great Awakening is before the world in Tracy's work of that name, and in more general histories, like Walker's "Congregationalists" in the American Church History Series. It is referred to here merely to bring to view the partisan feeling with which it was attended. Whether the revival movement should be promoted or repressed was the question. There were few who did not admit that great good had been accomplished by

it ; all admitted that in certain places great evil had followed. There was an overwhelming conviction that some of its developments were to be deplored. No one would now question that the Great Awakening was one of the most memorable events in New England history, yet different estimates of its value are still made by historians. While it was in progress doubts, hopes, fears, disapprobation were inevitable.

Whitefield's preaching was of such a moving character that many wept and some fainted. As the reports of revival interest spread through the land the feelings of the people were much aroused ; their susceptibilities became excitable, and in public services often uncontrollable. When the terrors of the law were presented and the dangers of an ungodly life were portrayed, men and women cried out, fainted, swooned and fell prostrate. After a time such occurrences were considered by some as an important part of the exercises. They were interpreted to be the immediate effect of the Holy Spirit ; the signs of his presence and co-operation.

Occasionally impulses of the Spirit, so called, that is, suggestions, visions, exclamations, narrations of experiences were so commingled that religious services became confused babblings. Were such things to be tolerated because of the good that accompanied them ? or, if not tolerated themselves, was the risk of their occurrence to be tolerated ?

In 1742, Edwards published an elaborate defense of the revival under the title, "Thoughts on the Revival in New England." This treatise was published before the most objectionable demonstrations

appeared. Very little can be said in opposition to his statements, but he nowhere brings under notice the things which his opponents most severely criticised. Few would now deny that he was right in considering it a wonderful work of God, right as to the obligation to promote it, as to the injustice done to some of its zealous promoters, and certainly he was right as to the things to be corrected, and as to the means to be adopted in promoting it. But this work of Edwards does not cover the entire ground. He apologized for outcries, street processions, street singing, and prolonged sessions of evening meetings in a way that carries little conviction at the present time, though his ideas should be modified rather than rejected. His contemporaries must have felt that there was too much of Edwards in the essay. He wrote to the trustees of the college at Princeton that his habit was "to improve every important hint, pursuing the clue to the utmost." Much as we admire this habit of mind, it is clear that it would introduce much of the subjective into his writings. His speculations connected with this revival, as those concerning the Millenium, his opinion that the latter day glory will begin in America, and probably in New England, seem to us pursuing the clue too far. They exposed him to ridicule in his own day. His defense of the revival did not exclude replies, indeed it was open to plausible objections,—especially this one, that he had not passed the entire case under review.

This work of Edwards was replied to, not formally, by Dr. Charles Chauncey of Boston, in 1743. His trea-

tise is a careful statement of facts collected from every part of New England, with such inferences and suggestions as flow from them. Chauncey adopts almost verbatim the main heads of Edwards' treatise as the main heads of his own. And it must be admitted that he establishes satisfactorily inferences and estimates of the work precisely opposite to those of Edwards. He does this, of course, by bringing forward facts which Edwards had omitted, of many of which he was probably ignorant. A single extract from Chauncey's work, "Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England," will show the character of those proceedings which he condemned.

"A friend in the country, in a letter to me, upon these matters, expresses himself in these words: 'Under the preaching and exhortations of these itinerants and exhorters, it is no unusual thing for persons to be plunged into the utmost anxiety and distress, which is often attended with a trembling of the body, fainting, falling down, etc. The preacher now frequently grows more tempestuous, and dreadful in his manner of address, and seems to endeavor all he can to increase and spread the consternation, and terrors of their souls, which, by this means, is sometimes spread over a great part of the assembly, in a few minutes from the first appearance. I have seen the *struck* (as they are called) and distressed, brought together from the several parts of the assembly, into the square body by themselves, and two or three persons at work upon them at once, smiting, stamping and crying out to them with a mighty voice, in the most terrible manner and language, the poor creatures fainting, screeching and bitterly crying out under them.'"¹

Scenes like this, and others still less decorous, Dr. Chauncey says, were common, were witnessed in many towns. Gatherings took place in churches and in private houses which were prolonged hour after hour, far into the night, and which were repeated day after day, in some places for eight or ten days. He presents the worst features of this religious movement, confessedly, for he desires to show the evils with which it may be charged. He is, however, strongly supported by testimonials coming from college faculties and from various ecclesiastical associations both in Massachusetts and Connecticut. Tracy in his "Great Awakening," gives the following extract from a paper adopted by an Association of Ministers, convened at Weymouth, January 15, 1745.

"We are free to acknowledge that some of us, a few years ago, pleased ourselves with the hopeful prospect of a happy state of the church. But, alas, the many sad effects of an enthusiastic, erroneous and divisive spirit, which have appeared since, chiefly promoted by Mr. Whitefield's itinerancy, and the other gentlemen who followed his steps, now afford melancholy proof that this judgment was formed too suddenly and upon too weak evidence."¹

This is mildly adverse when compared with many resolutions adopted by similar bodies.

Notwithstanding the many testimonies unfavorable to the revival, it is probable that gross disorders were the exception, not the rule. From the same source we learn that a considerable number of ministers met at Boston and adopted a paper to be sent out to the

1. p. 358.

churches under the title "The Testimony and Advice of an Assembly of Pastors of Churches in New England, at a meeting in Boston, July 7, 1743, occasioned by the late happy Revival of Religion in many parts of the Land." After a statement of their reasons for considering the revival a marked work of divine grace, they say :

"And now, we desire to bow the knee to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ; That our eyes have seen and our ears have heard such things. And while these are our sentiments, we must necessarily be grieved at any accounts sent abroad representing this work as all enthusiasm, delusion and disorder." "The number of signers at the meeting was sixty-eight ; attestors by letter forty-five."¹

Rev. Mr. Prince, Scribe of the meeting, reported :

"That very few of the ministers present at the late venerable assembly, complained of errors or disorders in the parishes they belonged to."

Some had no trouble from the beginning ; some had to meet certain irregularities at the first, but found little difficulty in repressing them ; and the general testimony was :

"The greatest errors and disorders were in those places where the ministers opposed the work, and thereby lost much of their respect and influence."²

Chauncey's work is valuable in that it shows that the chief excesses of the revival were not to be traced

1. Tracy's "Great Awakening," pp. 294-302.

2. pp. 294-302.

to Whitefield and Tennent. The sad antics of 1743 occurred in connection with the preaching of Davenport and his special companions. Whitefield thought favorably of Davenport, but did not know him thoroughly. Chauncey shows that he was familiar with religious sentiments like those developed in the latter part of the revival period, ten years before these public demonstrations. Five persons are mentioned as belonging to a club, while students in Yale College, under the lead of David Ferris, a fanatical Quaker from New Milford. These were Pomroy, Wheelock, Allen, Davenport and Bliss. These names will be recognized as connected more or less intimately with the excitements of the revival, but not with such results as to exclude them from positions of usefulness and influence in after days.

It is not to be supposed that the Great Awakening was the immediate source of New England Theology, either as suggesting its doctrines or as the occasion of their expression. President Edwards did not publish his treatise on the Will, till twelve years after his *Thoughts on the Revival* were given to the world. Hopkins did not publish his essays in opposition to Moderate Calvinism, till more than twenty years after the revival. But the revival established party lines, and gave each side occasion to emphasize its peculiar views. It set pens in motion and led many to commit themselves to sentiments afterwards more elaborately defended. Chauncey and his associates could not but affirm or imply that the use of the ordinary means of grace is the safest method of religious instruction. Edwards, in discussing the

question, "What must be done more directly to advance this work," mentioned as one thing, renouncing Arminianism. He probably included in this term all forms of belief that admit of indolent waiting in connection with religious duties. He thought none but a deist could fail to consider a revival a work of God. He says:

"Now is a good time for Arminians to change their principles. I would now, as one of the friends of this work, humbly invite them to come and join with us, and be on our side."

Indeed, from the revival of 1735, to his dismissal from the pastorate in 1750, his mind was incessantly occupied with questions concerning the work of the Holy Spirit; and after the revival of 1740, he was continually compelled to discriminate between his own views and those of its fanatical promoters. In 1738, he gave a series of lectures on "Divine Love," probably intended for publication, but which were not given to the public till 1851. His aim in this work is specially to emphasize the divine origin of Christian affection. In 1742, he published his "Thoughts on the Revival," a treatise already referred to; in 1746 he published his great work on the "Affections," a work which shows that his views upon psychology were ripening, while essentially the same as when he wrote the "Divine Love." In 1749, he published his "Humble Inquiry Concerning the Qualifications for Full Communion," an essay having as an ultimate aim the undermining of the half-way covenant scheme—which might really be said of all the above no-

ted treatises,—and in his “Farewell Discourse,” he says :

“Another thing that mostly concerns the future prosperity of this town, is, that you should watch against the encroachment of error, and particularly Arminianism, and doctrines of like tendency. You were, many of you, as I well remember, much alarmed with the apprehension of the danger of the prevailing of those corrupt principles, near sixteen years ago. But the danger then was small in comparison with what appears now. These doctrines at this day are much more prevalent than they were then ; the progress they have made in the land, within this seven years (since the revival, 1743), seems to have been vastly greater than at any time in the like space before.”

That the revival had roused inquiries which are associated with New England Theology and which foreshadowed some of the more distinguishing doctrines of Hopkinsianism, is manifest in many ways. We may notice as indicating the drift of thought, these entries in the private journal of the Rev. Ebenezer Parkman, quoted by Tracy. June 8, 1742, he notes :

“Mr. Wheeler, at evening, opposing my doctrine from Eph. 5:14,—that the natural man can do nothing but what is sinful.” June 15th—“I asked advice respecting the doctrine I had lately delivered from Eph. 5:14, and Rom. 8:8, and on that question—are there not some promises made to humble, fervent strivers, that they shall obtain the grace of God?”¹

These and similar topics were discussed by others in the years immediately succeeding the revival.

1. Great Awakening, pp. 208; 313.

CHAPTER II.

EDWARDEANISM IN NEW ENGLAND THEOLOGY.

The life and character of President Edwards are too well known to require extended remark. The following succinct statements are taken from Professor Moses Coit Tyler's *History of American Literature* :

“Jonathan Edwards, the most original and acute thinker yet produced in America, was born at East Windsor, Conn., in 1703; was graduated at Yale College in 1720; was a preacher in New York for about eight months prior to April, 1723; was tutor in Yale College from the summer of 1724 until the summer of 1726; in 1727 became pastor of the church at Northampton, and so continued until 1750; from 1751 until 1758 was missionary to the Indians near Stockbridge; on the sixteenth of February, 1758, was installed as president of the College of New Jersey, and died a few weeks afterward, namely, on the twenty-second of March.”¹

Edwards' position in the history of the American Churches, his intellectual capacities and his interest in the welfare of his fellow men combined to give him a most marked influence over our ecclesiastical affairs.

1. Tyler's *History of American Literature*, II, p. 177.

To say that he was possessed of a mind of the first order would be but a weak assertion of the truth. His processes of thinking had an affinity with the truths of theology, of philosophy, of nature that has excited the astonishment of all who have come to an appreciation of his powers. His industry was as remarkable as his abilities. He studied with his pen in hand and wrote down his thoughts for future reference, and in this way amassed an amount of manuscript that would fill volumes. It is reported that Dr. Samuel Hopkins, who may be said to have been the trustee of his writings, some of which he edited and published, spent six years in the study of these documents. But Edwards with all his fondness for study and his habits as a recluse, was a man for the times. He kept himself informed as to the political and scientific progress of the world, and especially allowed no important religious movement to escape his notice. The historian Bancroft said :

“He that will know the workings of the mind of New England in the middle of the last century, and the throbbings of its heart, must give his days and nights to the study of Jonathan Edwards.”

In theology he may be said to have accepted, absorbed and embodied the best thinking of his time. He adopted the creed of his denomination and in a general way adhered to it through life. His speculations, however, led him to enlarge and modify some views of truth, and so to introduce some changes into the current theology. He thought it necessary to set forth some new statements in

order to defend the main doctrines of Calvinism, but the modifications he introduced were for the sake of that which is old rather than for anything new. He was the representative of the old theology in his attempt to rid it of the deteriorations caused by the Arian and Arminian tendencies of the time; he was the source of the "new divinity" in that his friends and pupils, prompted and guided by his teachings, defended and advocated the scheme of doctrine which bore that name. It has been questioned whether Edwards would have been in sympathy with those who claimed to be his followers, but there can be no doubt that, whatever he might have thought of certain doctrines of the new divinity, historically a new period begins with him. The early theology of New England has not had a complete, unbroken sway since his day; later New England theology, so far as it is recognized as orthodox and evangelical, points back to him as the radiating centre. No one can study the course of religious thought in New England without feeling that he marks an epoch. Beyond him we perceive something of the atmosphere of antiquity, on the hither side we are conscious of the freshness of recent thought. A study of the scheme of theology that appropriates the title *New England*, properly begins, therefore, with its Edwardean elements.

No one of the leaders in this school was ambitious to found a system to be called by his own name, but each gave the world the result of his speculations in order to meet an emergency of the times, to oppose error, or to advocate an important truth.

Edwards wrote in response to the demands of his day, without any presentiment of the fact that he was opening the way for Hopkinsianism and yet other and later doctrinal schemes. Still it was his freedom of thought, his philosophical principles, his religious fervor and his anxiety to see new life infused into the churches of the country, that gave the impetus to that thinking, which after a slow development appeared as the New England scheme. He was not wholly in sympathy with the times in which he lived, but in many ways moved athwart the current of events. On the other hand he might have stood aghast at certain results to which his innovations have led, but to us of this day, he appears more in accord with those later called "new lights," than with their opponents.

If we arrange his works as a reformer under three heads we shall have in a comprehensible form his part in the new theology. He effected changes in practical theology, in current metaphysical speculations, and in doctrinal theology. It is not intended that he introduced anything absolutely new in these departments, but that he effected changes in the habits and views of his contemporaries and successors.

I.

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY.

1. He held to the duty of immediate and energetic effort in seeking the salvation of the soul. A common doctrine, as has been already noticed,

was that those who put themselves under the influence of the means of grace, will in due time, probably be brought into the Kingdom of God; he urged his hearers to press into the Kingdom of God. *Taking the Kingdom by violence* was a favorite expression with him. Still he did not formulate the doctrine which his successors educed from his teaching, that every man has the power on the instant to change his heart and be a follower of Christ. He accepted the current view of regeneration so far as the process is concerned, and urged the impenitent to take such a position that the grace of God would probably reach them; he did not, like the Hopkinsians, urge them to save themselves. He addressed his audience in this way:

“Though God has not bound himself to anything that a person does while destitute of faith, and out of Christ, yet there is a great probability that in a way of hearkening to his counsel you will live; and that by pressing onward and persevering, you will at last, as it were by violence, take the kingdom of heaven. Those of you who have not only heard the directions given, but shall through God’s merciful assistance, practice according to them, are those that probably will overcome.”

... “God is pleased at this time, in a very remarkable manner, to pour out his spirit amongst us; (glory be to his name!) You that have a mind to obtain converting grace and go to heaven when you die, now is your season! Now, if you have any sort of prudence for your own salvation, and have not a mind to go to hell, improve this season! Now is the accepted time!”

... “How much more easily converting grace is obtained at such a time, than at other times! The

work is equally easy with God at all times ; but there is far less difficulty in the way as to *men* at such a time, than at other times. It is, as I said before, a day of God's gracious visitation ; a day that he has, as it were, set apart for the more liberally and bountifully dispensing of his grace ; a day wherein God's hand is opened wide. Experience shows it."

These extracts from a sermon, "Pressing into the Kingdom of God," preached in the revival of 1735, indicate a spirit very different from the then prevalent Arminianism, and show that even in our day, many conservative teachers would look upon him as an enthusiast and something of an innovator.

2. A later development, but one accompanied with more serious consequences, was his view concerning full church-membership. The half-way covenant scheme had accustomed the minds of the people to a somewhat intimate connection of the unregenerate with the church. Mr. Stoddard, the predecessor of Edwards at Northampton, had strongly advocated receiving the unregenerate to full communion, on the ground that the Lord's Supper is a converting ordinance. Edwards, in the early years of his pastorate, accepted the practice of his church and admitted members to its fellowship in the customary way. He had misgivings as to the propriety of the practice, but continued it while he was carefully studying the subject. He at length became convinced that church fellowship required acceptance of the doctrines of grace by the heart as well as by the intellect ; or that visible saints must have the appearance of real conversion to God as well as of real conviction of

the truth of the gospel. He made known his views somewhat publicly after his mind became fully settled, but no great disturbance followed till a young man came to him and proposed to join the church. The requirement of a more explicit profession of godliness than had been previously demanded raised a great ferment in the town, and, combined with other causes of dissatisfaction, led to the dismissal of Edwards from the parish. During the commotion over the pastor's change of views he wrote his essay on the terms of communion. He was not permitted to preach on the subject before his people, and was compelled to resort to the press in self-defence. The treatise is a very thorough argumentation of the case, mostly from the Scriptures. The title of the work describes it very fully: "An Humble Inquiry into the Rules of the Word of God concerning the Qualifications requisite to a Complete Standing and Full Communion in the Visible Christian Church." This was laid before his church and the public in October, 1749, but it had no effect to stay the excitement of the parish and he was dismissed in the following June. Though he was unable to save himself from impending disaster, he did much towards rescuing the churches from laxity of doctrine and consequent laxity of discipline. He did more than any one else to establish the New England doctrine on this point.

Edwards' "Humble Inquiry" was written avowedly in opposition to Stoddardism, but it has sometimes been said that he has nowhere committed himself in opposition to the half-way covenant. It

is clear, however, that his judgment was in decided opposition to this scheme. He argues that excluding the children of the unregenerate from baptism would not have a tendency to promote irreligion and profaneness, because it does not shut them out from access to Christian privileges, but is simply declining to bestow honors and badges where there is no claim. Refusing to bestow such honors would rather rouse parents and children to a discharge of their neglected duties.

The first topic, Practical Theology, is not one which requires prolonged study. The practice of New England is now settled, and has been settled without discussion involving metaphysical distinctions, except that the method of addressing the impenitent has elicited some philosophical debates, to be noticed hereafter.

II.

METAPHYSICS.

Edwards was unsurpassed in the power of acute original speculation. He would have been the peer of the great German or great Greek philosophers if he had made study in this department the work of his life. What he has left us that might bear the name of Edwards' philosophy would have been of greater value if he had given more time to adjustment of parts and harmonizing of views taken from different standpoints. He wrote much, pursuing each clue to the utmost, it may be inferred, without the closest regard to the educts from other clues. If

he had been the editor of his own works their worth would have been increased.

There are two topics requiring notice in a study of New England Theology, which he has treated in a metaphysical way, viz: Theism and Virtue.

1. THEISM. We are obliged to present his views of Deity through inferences rather than any formal statements, for he wrote for practical purposes, but so far as we need to pursue the subject the underlying and implied ideas are in no way obscure. He says that Space is God, and implies that Being is God, in its ultimate idea. He says :

“To find out the reasons of things in natural philosophy is only to find out the proportion of God’s acting. And the case is the same as to such proportions, whether we suppose the world only mental, in our sense, or no.”¹

This means that all natural phenomena are an immediate activity of God, whether, as known to us, they are subjective or objective. These are youthful speculations, but there is no evidence that his views were essentially changed in later life. When at the height of his mental vigor he said :

“I do suppose there is a great absurdity in the nature of things simply considered in supposing that there should be no God, or in denying Being in general, and supposing an eternal, absolute, universal nothing ; and therefore that here would be foundation of intuitive evidence that it cannot be ; and that eternal, infinite, most perfect Being must be ; if we had strength and comprehension of mind suffi-

1 Dwight’s Memoir, p. 669.

cient to have a clear idea of general and universal Being, or, which is the same thing, of the infinite, eternal, most perfect Divine Nature and Essence.”¹

That we should see an eternal, most perfect Being by seeing Being in general, seems like making God the One and All. He has given us his conception of the Deity in his treatise on the End for which God created the world. He says the last end in the creation is God’s glory, or more fully the manifestation of his glory. He begins with the idea that God exists in all the fulness of perfections, with a disposition to manifest his perfections. If power is a good, it is because there is a possibility of its producing an effect; and if the possibility of producing an effect is good, then the actuality of the effect is good. There is a kind of multiplying of these excellences in their manifestation. This diffusive disposition of God is the basis of the creation. In the creation God diffuses himself into outward manifestation. “His propensity to diffuse himself is a propensity to himself diffused.” God’s internal glory is his understanding and his will. His external glory is the emanation of his internal glory. When he communicates his excellence to men he imparts to the understanding a knowledge of himself, and to the will holiness, which is a love of himself, and happiness, which is a joy in himself.

“In the creature’s knowing, esteeming, loving, rejoicing in and praising God, the glory of God is both exhibited and acknowledged; his fulness is

1. II, p. 27.

The references to Edwards’ works are to the four volume edition.

received and returned. Here is both an *emanation* and a *remanation*. The refulgence shines upon and into the creature, and is reflected back to the luminary.”¹

We are not to suppose from the representation, that an effulgence shines upon the creature; that the creature had a previous existence of a different kind from the emanation here spoken of. We are to consider rather that the entire creation—emanation of the light, the creature receiving and reflecting the light—is one simple and continuous act of God. He says:

“God’s upholding created substance, or causing its existence in each successive moment is altogether equivalent to an immediate production out of nothing at each moment. Because its existence at each moment is not merely in part from God, but wholly from him, and not in any part or degree from its antecedent existence.”²

This view of Edwards has sometimes been spoken of as rigid divine sovereignty, but it might more properly be designated the prevalence of the Infinite Will. However he may have fallen into language implying the relation of Ruler and subject in the use of such terms as covenant and promise, his favorite sentiment was, that God’s activity is from himself and to himself, an independent and uninterrupted realizing of his own will.

2. VIRTUE. Edwards’ speculations on this topic and the kindred one—God’s Last End in the Creation—are purely methaphysical. If there is any exception

1. II. p. 255.

2. II. p. 439.

to this statement in regard to virtue, it is due, probably to emendations suggested by friends to whom he read the essay. His statements upon the main question are abstract, and his ideas objective. Subjective excellence as exhibited in character seems hardly to have entered his mind. He writes concerning true virtue, godliness, holiness, but there could hardly be a greater contrast between two pieces of composition than that between this essay and some of the closing parts of Paul's epistles, for example, the fifth and sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians.

His question is, What is virtue? or, What is the primal virtue? or, In what does virtue begin? Suppose there were no virtue in existence and the time of its entrance into being were come, what would be the first virtue? He makes it accord with Being in general, *i. e.*, Being as a whole. His study of this subject began in his college days, and his thoughts are akin to his views of Being as necessary, of Nothing as an absurdity, of God as the sum of Being, including even space. If at any time God existed alone his virtue would be his agreement with, his accord with, himself. Since virtue is a quality of a moral being, it is an exercise of the heart, and accord of heart with Being in general is love of Being in general, or love of Being simply considered. It is the love of Being not for its qualities but simply as an existence. Considered as benevolence it is absolute benevolence, or a disposition to love Being in general, the disposition being a primal fact, not called out by any special occasion.

“It is that consent, propensity and union of

heart to Being in general, that is immediately exercised in a general good will.”¹

This statement carefully interpreted carries the entire doctrine with it. We have at the outset a general good will, *i. e.*, a will favorably disposed to things in general, the whole of existence, and when Being simple is presented before it the good will embraces it immediately, *i. e.*, without any medium, in a union of heart with it.

Edwards’ view of virtue does not differ essentially from that which makes it accord with the nature of things. He says, indeed :

“And perhaps it is needless for me to give notice to my readers, that when I speak of an intelligent Being’s having a heart united and benevolently disposed to Being in general, I thereby mean *intelligent* Being in general. Not inanimate things, or Beings that have no perception or will, which are not properly capable objects of benevolence.”²

This concession seems not wholly in keeping with the essay taken as a whole, and it opens the way to some differences of view among his followers, but with him may have meant no more than, that all things have their meaning in the divine plan and their being in the divine will, therefore our good will is directed in the end to a person not to dead matter. He says in his essay on the End for which God created the world, in which he makes creation an emanation :

“Among created beings one single person must

1. II. p. 262.

2. II. p. 263.

be looked upon as inconsiderable in comparison of the generality ; and so his interest as of little importance compared with the interest of the whole system ; therefore in them, a disposition to prefer self, as if it were more than all, is exceeding vicious. But it is vicious on no other account than as it is a disposition that does not agree with the nature of things ; and that which is indeed the greatest good. And a disposition in any one to forego his own interest for the sake of others, is no further excellent, no further worthy the name of generosity than it is a treating things according to their true value.”¹

He argues that virtue must be love of Being in general, or, Being as such, (his expression is “ Being simply considered ”) otherwise there should be virtue before the first virtue ; complacency cannot be the primary virtue for it is the love of a foregoing benevolence which is a virtue apart from complacency. For the same reason gratitude cannot be the primary essential virtue, for it implies the recognition of a preceding excellence which is not gratitude. Being simply, therefore, not an excellence attributable to it, must be the object of the primal virtuous love. The virtue of man is like that of God. He loved Being when there was nothing else to love, before created things existed ; man must have the same disposition. And it must be love of Being in general, for a partial love has not the perfect beauty that belongs to the love of the whole. If a finite system were the entire system, if a society of friends constituted the universe, then a love of that system would be virtue, but if the limited system is part of

1. II. p. 215.

a greater whole, then the love that is virtuous must embrace the whole.

The evidence that this love or benevolence is virtue, Edwards finds in the intuition of the person whom God has enlightened so that he can discern the spiritual beauty that belongs to a union of heart with Being in general. It is an axiom with him that virtue is beauty and the highest spiritual beauty is true virtue. He implies in many places that the virtuous state is a gift of God, and the power to discern the virtue of that state is also his gift. He denies that the ordinary powers of man are competent to apprehend true virtue. Reason and conscience indeed recognize a beauty in the harmonies of the world, a beauty in the benevolence that constitutes virtue, but do not appreciate them at their true worth. A spiritual discernment, the result of a divine enlightenment, is necessary for this. Conscience approves of benevolence, but not for the same reason that the spiritual sense does, and can never apprehend the nature of true virtue.

The doctrine that virtue is benevolence has a large place in New England Theology. It is a dogma that has been handed down from one generation to another and maintained with different shades of meaning by different authors, but the contribution which Edwards made to the discussion is perhaps sufficiently indicated by the above remarks. Later discussions of the doctrine will be noticed hereafter.

It may be noticed that this doctrine of virtue has met with very strenuous opposition from the time of the publication of Edwards' essay. It has been

subjected to both criticism and ridicule in this country and in Great Britain.

III.

DOGMATIC THEOLOGY.

Edwards' chief work comes under this head, and his teachings appear in a polemic form. He wrote upon the will in opposition to the Arminians, and upon original sin in opposition to the Pelagians. We notice each of these works.

1. THE WILL. The full title of the work is : "A careful and strict Inquiry into the modern prevailing notions of that Freedom of Will which is supposed to be essential to moral agency, virtue and vice, reward and punishment, praise and blame." This is his most noted work, and is by most people, but not by all, considered his ablest work. It was published in 1754. He had for years contemplated writing it, and had during his entire ministry, been advocating the views which he there presents. The full title, as given above, indicates that Arminianism had put on a bold front ; it is a matter of history that Calvinism was under a cloud. Dr. Jonathan Edwards, speaking of the work of his father as a theologian, says :

"On the great subject of Liberty and Necessity Mr. Edwards made very important improvements. Before him the Calvinists were nearly driven out of the field by the Arminians, Pelagians and Socinians. They were pressed and embarrassed by the objection ; that the sense in which they interpreted the sacred

writings was inconsistent with human liberty, moral agency, accountableness, praise and blame. The Calvinists themselves began to be ashamed and to give it up, so far at least as relates to liberty and necessity. This was true especially of Dr. Watts and Doddridge, who in their day were accounted leaders of the Calvinists.”¹

As a critique the work on the Will is unequalled. The clearness with which the author states the Arminian positions, the directness and decisiveness with which he overthrows them, has called forth the admiration alike of those who assent to his main doctrine and those who differ with him. He shows that responsibility does not rest on the fact that we choose our choices for that would require a choice before the first choice. He shows that responsibility cannot rest upon a freedom that implies indifference to the object chosen, for this would imply a choice without a preference, which is a contradiction in terms. He shows that a choice cannot be so connected with contingencies as to afford the freedom on which responsibility rests. His argument here assumes that every event must have a cause and the cause produces the effect by necessity of consequence. The objection to Edwards' views by his opponents would be, rather that he had not fully stated their case than that he had not replied to their positions as he had stated them. Especially would they demur to his position on contingent action. They held that the case of fallen man is peculiar, and not to be illustrated either by that of

1. Works of Edwards the Younger. I. p. 481.

holy beings or by that of utterly lost beings. God cannot do wrong, absolute apostates cannot do right, but man is not in the condition of either. Whitby, whose writings Edwards had before him in preparing his essay, says :

“The liberty belonging to this question is only that of a lapsed man in a state of trial, probation and temptation; whether he hath a freedom to choose life or death, to answer or reject the calls and invitations of God to do, by the assistance of the grace afforded in the gospel to him, what is spiritually good as well as evil; or whether he be determined to one, having only a freedom from co-action, but not from necessity.”¹

Whitby argues man’s competency to acts spiritually good, and hence his responsibility, from the exhortations of the gospel and from the consciousness of guilt, universal among men; and says :

“And indeed, who feels not the truth of these words of St. Austin, ‘that it is unjust to condemn him as disobedient, who hath no power to obey,’ or to punish men for doing evil, though they lie under a necessity of doing it, only because they do it willingly, seeing they must do it willingly if they do it at all; because they must first will to do it, and so it is as necessary for them to be willing, as it is to do it?”²

The main issue between the Arminians and Calvinists, so far as philosophy is concerned, is at this point; does the freedom necessary to responsibility

1. Five Points, p. 262, edition of 1817.

2. Five Points, p. 301.

require freedom from necessity, that is, what Edwards calls necessity of consequence, what is known as determinism? or the question might be: whether there is any connection between freedom and responsibility.

Edwards sought rather to suppress Arminianism than to establish positively the basis of responsibility. He has, however, given his views upon this point, yet not with such general acceptance as that accorded to his criticism of Arminian liberty. He explains man's responsibility for things which he is unable to do by means of the distinction between natural and moral ability and inability. Natural ability is the power to do a thing if we will. When there is no lack of strength or capacity, where there are no obstacles to hinder in the performance of any deed, we have natural power to perform it. In such a case, if the act is one we are under obligation to perform, we are justly held responsible for its performance. In such circumstances a moral inability to perform the deed does not excuse us from the responsibility. We may have such a disinclination to humble ourselves before one whom we have injured that we will not do it, and so long as we will not we cannot. But this inability is no justification of failing to perform the duty. And if our circumstances were such that we should yield so far as mechanically to humble ourselves, yet should do it hypocritically, so that we willed not the humiliation but the advantage to be gained by the form of humiliation, we should then neither have fulfilled our obligation nor have discharged our responsibility.

And our blameworthiness would not cease if we were unable to bring ourselves to a willing humiliation. Yet this moral inability is as absolute an inability, so Edwards held, as a natural inability would be. The causes which control will-action are as certain in result as physical forces. The difference is not in the certainty of the connection but in the things connected. How then, is one guilty for failing to do what he cannot do? He is guilty because the moral quality of an act is in its nature not in its cause. Malice, dishonesty, intemperance are vicious because of the quality that resides in them, not from the causes that give rise to them.

In this way Edwards wholly separated moral character, guilt or innocence from liberty or freedom. He made choice the spontaneous movement of the will under the influence of motives, and when the choice is made the question of guilt or innocence is settled. But freedom is an after consideration. There is no other freedom than freedom from coercion or compulsion in carrying out the choice, after it has been made and after its moral character is fixed. He says no other freedom is possible or conceivable.

2. ORIGINAL SIN. Edwards probably considered his dissertation on "Original Sin" more important than that on the "Will." Pelagianism stands in more direct hostility to traditional orthodoxy than Arminianism. It is true that in his day, the latter term was often used as if it included original sin, but the distinction between the two was perfectly well understood. It is also true that he believed that the Arminian doc-

trine of free-will would, if fully accepted and made thoroughly practical, displace all such doctrines as total depravity, atonement and regeneration, but he did not fear that it would be generally accepted, much less become thoroughly practical. In fact it was in his day, and has been ever since, accompanied with the doctrine of gracious ability. But in the rejection of the doctrine of original sin he saw the rejection of the entire scheme of grace. He therefore set himself to the task not only of criticising its opponents, but of establishing the doctrine itself. The contrast between the title of this work and of that on the will is noticeable. He begins:

“The great Christian Doctrine of Original Sin defended; evidences of its truth produced.”

Then follows what amounts to the entire title of the treatise on the Will, an announcement of reply to opponents.

There is an interest of a personal character connected with this treatise, since it is the last that he prepared for publication and was passing through the press at the time of his death in 1758. It exhibits the same boldness of speculation that characterized his youthful days, and shows that trying experiences had not blunted the keenness of his wit or his metaphysical acumen.

Pelagianism denies the depravity of human nature. It accounts for the evils that enter into human experiences, at least those connected with blameworthiness, by circumstances, not by the qualities of the soul or the tendencies of nature. It teaches that in

the fall Adam injured no one but himself, that his posterity enter upon life with all the advantages which he enjoyed, and that while many, led astray by bad example, fall into sin, some live lives essentially sinless, and any one has the power to cease from sin, at any time, and enter on a holy life. It teaches that the expression involuntary sin is a contradiction in terms, that merit and demerit are acquired by acts of the will solely, that original righteousness and original sin are alike absurdities. The conveyance of a corrupt and sinful nature from Adam to his posterity is denied.

Such are the views which Edwards opposes. He says :

“I now proceed to say that mankind are all naturally in such a state, as is attended, without fail, with this consequence or issue: that they universally run themselves into that which is, in effect, their own utter, eternal perdition, as being finally accursed of God, and the subjects of his remediless wrath through sin. From which I infer that the natural state of the mind of man is attended with a propensity of nature, which is prevalent and effectual to such an issue, and that therefore their nature is corrupt and depraved with a moral depravity, that amounts to and implies their utter undoing.”¹

He says of the arguments which he adduces in favor of the position here taken he thinks they “are truly solid, and do really and justly conclude, either that men are born guilty and so are chargeable with sin before they come to act for themselves, or else commit sin immediately, without the least time inter-

1. II., p. 313.

vening, after they are capable of understanding their obligation to God and reflecting on themselves.”¹

We need not follow out Edwards' argument in favor of this doctrine; it is drawn from the Scriptures and from human history and is not peculiar to him or to New England Theology. His conception of original sin, however, as a fact in humanity deserves our attention. How do men become possessed of original sin? The answers are various. The last quotation from Edwards indicates that he could tolerate a doctrine of sin that would deny individual guilt till one had put forth a moral act but he did not adopt it, as some of his successors did. Some hold that on the ground of a covenant between man and God, Adam's sin is imputed to his descendants and that they are immediately, at birth, brought into a correspondent state of corruption and guilt. He did not accept this view. Some hold that Adam being the entire race at the fall, in his fall carried down the race with him. It is fallen humanity that is individualized in his descendants, so that they are born corrupt and guilty. His view amounts to this in the result, but he did not accept this explanation of the matter. He resorted to his doctrine of theism to furnish himself with a theory. The divine will is the one universal force. Its preservation of created things is a new creation each moment. A created object is in no sense the cause of its existence at the next moment. A body can act only where it is and when it is; a body, like the moon, for example, is not for two successive instants in the same

1. II., p. 327.

time, or place, therefore it could not in the first instant produce itself in the second, it is utterly dependent on the power of the creator. Adam was dependent, in like manner, each moment of his life on God's creative power. It was this creative power which made him identically the same man at any two points of time,—the same man when he was fifty and when he was a hundred years old. The same power could make him and any other person identically one at the same instant. And in this way God has caused all of Adam's posterity to sin with him and fall with him. In accord with the divine constitution the race is one person and is guilty of the first transgression. The pollution of the race, which is original sin, is the extended pollution of Adam resulting from his sin at the fall. God imputes Adam's sin to each of his descendants because each is guilty. The pollution of each one is a fact, obvious to those who read our nature aright, and is the ground of the imputation of Adam's sin. The imputation is mediate, not immediate; has a justifying reason in our corrupt nature.

This explanation of original sin has not been adopted into New England Theology, but the basis of it, a constitution established by the Creator, has been adopted and fills an important place in the system. The expression was probably derived from, and its use justified by, Romans, 5: 19. "For as through one man's disobedience the many were made (*constituted*) sinners"; yet Edwards brought it into use and his followers adopted it. Their dependence on it as an explanation was not less complete than his, though

the specific kind of constitution which he advocated they have generally rejected. His successors have also been inclined to follow him in the doctrine of mediate imputation, so far as they have adopted imputation at all.

CHAPTER III.

DOCTRINES PROMINENTLY DISCUSSED IN NEW ENGLAND THEOLOGY.

It will be necessary after having noticed Edwards' work, to group to some extent, the thoughts of different authors, and to consider together publications of different dates. But before giving attention to the doctrines that are to come under review, we may notice briefly two authors who were friends and disciples of Edwards, through whom his influence was extended.

Joseph Bellamy and Samuel Hopkins were both for a time members of his family, studied theology under his instruction, eagerly and deferentially perused whatever he published, and held him personally in reverential esteem. It is no slight encomium of Edwards that two such men, not easily overawed by their associates, should have looked up to him as their leader. Nor is it to the discredit of Edwards that he should have desired their sanction and followed their suggestions in preparing treatises for publication. Though Edwards was more than fifteen years the senior of Bellamy and about eighteen years the senior of Hopkins, the three were for more than

fifteen years confidential friends, meeting at times by appointment for the discussion of theological opinions and essays, having free access to books that either might possess, and in frequent communication through correspondence. The friendship continued between the latter two for thirty years after the death of Edwards.

Joseph Bellamy was born in New Cheshire, Conn., February 20, 1719. He was graduated at Yale College at the age of sixteen, was licensed to preach two years later, and in 1740, at the age of twenty-one, became pastor of the church at Bethlem, Conn., where he remained till his death in 1790. His precocity of intellect did not indicate premature ripeness but natural preeminence. Wherever he came in contact with others he easily took a conspicuous position, commonly the first. He accepted the rank accorded him with a consciousness of strength, so that it was said of him when stricken with paralysis in 1786, by one not in sympathy with his theological sentiments, that he could domineer no longer. He had the gifts of an orator; a discriminating intellect, a flexible and commanding voice, an abundant vocabulary with free and flowing utterance, a majestic bearing and the consciousness of having a message for his hearers. His church was small and during the great revival of 1740 and the succeeding years he left his parish for considerable periods and preached as an itinerant. He was much sought for and was considered by some the equal of Whitefield. In the course of two years he preached 458 times in 213 places. He very soon gave over this itinerant work

and resolutely refused to resume it. He seems to have been doubtful as to its utility, at least he very decidedly disapproved of the excesses which followed the Great Awakening. It was the study of the effects of this movement which led to the preparation for the press of the work by which he is now best known: "True Religion Delineated; or, Experimental Religion, as Distinguished from Formality on the one hand, and Enthusiasm on the other." Edwards read the manuscript of this work, favored its publication and wrote a preface for it. It was published in 1750, and has been considered worthy of a place by the side of "Edwards on the Affections,"—a work of kindred aim. Bellamy was known in his day as a vigorous opponent of Antinomianism and of the half-way Covenant. Of the New England clergy he was the most earnest and persistent opponent of the latter scheme. He was also their most famous theological instructor in his day, having been said to be the first to establish "a school of the prophets" in his own house. He received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of Aberdeen in 1768.

Circumstances combined with natural tendencies made Samuel Hopkins the most intimate literary friend of Edwards, and the best representative of Edwardeanism. When a senior in college he conceived a high admiration for Edwards on hearing him preach, and ever after looked upon him as the leading clergyman of his acquaintance. In after years while he could say, that there was no better preacher in the country than Bellamy, and was able, as he thought, to detect some mistakes and inconsistencies

in Edwards' theology, it is clear that he always considered Edwards as, all in all, without a peer.

Hopkins was born in Waterbury, Conn., September 17, 1721. He was, therefore, eighteen years younger than Edwards and two and a half years younger than Bellamy. He graduated from Yale College in 1741. He went before the close of the year to study theology with Edwards at Northampton. He was in Edwards' family, in all, about eight months, but not continuously. He was of a desponding disposition and at once excited Mrs. Edwards' interest and sympathy. Her religious sentiments and Christian experience undoubtedly exercised a marked influence upon him. He was licensed to preach in April, 1742. He seems to have preached with good acceptance but not with great pleasure to himself. He performed stated work, however, after December of that year, and in June, 1743, began his work at Housatonic, afterward Great Barrington. The following month he spent a Sabbath at Edwards' house but refused to preach though urged to do so. He sat under Edwards' ministrations through the day, and was discouraged and ashamed of himself, after listening to his teacher. In December of the same year he was ordained and settled as pastor over a church of five members at Housatonic. The position was not a favorable one for such a man. The town was a border settlement, having a heterogeneous population, noted for immorality, famous for disregard of the Sabbath, for intemperance and horse-racing. The pastor was not the man to make himself readily influential with people of that class; still he had

warm friends in the parish and remained there in the ministerial office twenty-five years. We have no special means of knowing how he spent the youthful years of his ministry, but we know it was in a rough border town and amid the dangers rising from the hostility of the French and such of the Indians as were in league with them. It is certain that he performed the duties of his office with scrupulous conscientiousness, that he studied the Scriptures with great carefulness and devotion, and that he gave much time to the work for which nature formed him—the study of theology. Within eight years from his installation Edwards came to Stockbridge and for the next seven years the two were within an hour's drive of each other. Though Hopkins had a mind no less independent than that of Edwards, these years must have been dominated by theological communings with his former teacher. Edwards died in 1758 and at the request of his wife his papers were put into the hands of Hopkins who spent six years in studying the manuscripts and selecting and preparing portions of them for publication. In 1765, he brought out two essays, that on "God's Last End in Creation," and the "Dissertation on Virtue." This brings us near to the close of his ministry in Great Barrington. He had never been a favorite with the mass of the people; there was something of discontent in the church, his salary was in arrears, and after a year or two of uncertainty as to the course to be pursued, he was dismissed by council in January, 1769. After an interval of about fifteen months he was settled as pastor of the First Congregational Church of Newport, R. I.

The period between his dismissal and his second installation was one of annoyance and turmoil. He was already engaged in controversy, his opinions had become generally known and were distasteful to a great part of the clergy, the call to his new parish was hesitant and never unanimous, there were pastors in neighboring parishes who opposed the call, so that his acceptance of the position was under many discouragements. Dr. Stiles, afterwards president of Yale College, the pastor of the Second Church in Newport, was a decided opponent of Hopkinsianism, as Hopkins' views were then derisively designated, and was known to disfavor his coming. The personal relations of the two were, however, always friendly.

The life of Hopkins after going to Newport divides itself into three periods:—six years of pleasant and cheering labor, three years of exile, while the British occupied the town, and twenty-three years, including those of his infirmity late in life, of cheerless and scantily remunerated toil. The Revolutionary War had an unhappy effect upon Newport; its property was destroyed to a large extent, the better families were scattered, many of them never returned, a new class of people took the leadership in the place, the French soldiers stationed there had disseminated their infidel views, so that the pastor, (for a time the pastor in fact of two churches, for Dr. Stiles did not return after the war,) had in many respects an uncongenial home.

Dr. Hopkins must at times have preached with much power. One or two of his sermons made a

deep impression in Boston. He preached for considerable periods in Salem and Newburyport, and won for himself lasting friendships and a permanent influence in both places. He was not without invitations both in early and late life, to settle over eligible churches. Still he was never a popular preacher, his power was in the matter of his discourses, not in the graces of oratory. Dr. W. E. Channing, who from his childhood had known him, and for a short time sat under his ministry, says:

“His delivery in the pulpit was the worst I ever met with. Such tones never came from any human voice within my hearing. He was the very ideal of bad delivery. Then, I must say, the matter was often as uninviting as the manner. His manner had a bluntness partly natural, partly the result of long seclusion in the country.”

In addition to these obstacles to success he was by nature wanting in the cheer, vivacity and hopefulness which are indispensable to a happy pastorate. Though he was an agreeable companion, and readily fell into humorous conversation with those who became familiar with him, his measured stateliness overawed and repelled the young, and was ordinarily a check upon social intercourse. His temperament was sombre, his estimate of the world—the Christian world—unfavorable; he often doubted his own “good estate,” he questioned the piety of many professing Christians, and thought much of the preaching in the churches misleading and erroneous. He came to put an exaggerated estimate on his own pet doctrines, and thought the reason why the preaching of the

gospel was so ineffective was, that the clergy did not understand the doctrine of disinterested benevolence and the character of unregenerate doings.

It is as a theologian that he appears at best advantage. It was natural for him to dwell upon principles. Dr. Channing describes him as living in a world of thought. Those who criticised his writings, as Mr. Mills and President Langdon, attributed his errors to too great faith in metaphysics. His mind was comprehensive and was given to systematizing. It is no slight praise that the term Hopkinsian or Hopkintonian, applied to his scheme of thought in ridicule by Rev. William Hart, should remain a term of honor and serve to raise the object of ridicule into a most conspicuous place among New England theologians.

His peculiar views will be noticed hereafter, but it may be remarked that in 1793 he published his "System of Doctrine Contained in Divine Revelation." This is still one of the best statements of the New England System. He was ten years in preparing it. It was well received and furnished him something of an income when an income was much needed.

We turn now to consider the New England doctrine.

I.

THE DIVINE PERMISSION OF SIN.

It was inevitable that theologians adopting Edwards' ideas of benevolence and virtue should

find themselves compelled to bring the existence of sin under discussion. Some idea of the popular estimate of their theology may be drawn from current representations of their views. They were reported to hold that sin is a good, that for which we should be thankful, from which we should not pray to be delivered, while a man had better be found killing his father and mother than praying and reading the Bible, that is, than using the means of grace while in an unregenerate state. Such representations are misrepresentations except as taken in the proper connections, yet their views, both of duty and sin, were peculiar. They did not really attempt a theodicy, for their conception of the divine sovereignty was such as to set aside attempts to justify the ways of God. They did not consider themselves called upon to defend the Divine Ruler, but assumed his justice and benevolence, and argued *a priori*, that whatever he has done, among other things making certain the sins of the world, is wisest and best. Edwards was especially overawed by the majesty of God, and was little inclined to raise questions concerning the divine procedure. His wonderful visions of the divine glory, his ecstasie contemplation of future blessedness seem to have disinclined him to philosophize upon the matter of sin. He attributed sin to a negative cause, though he admitted that there is a sense in which God may be said to be its author. His view of virtue also required him to make some explanation, or attempt an explanation, of the existence of evil. He made all virtue benevolence,—the divine holiness benevolence—and could not have avoided asking him-

self how the Almighty Ruler of the world could make his love of men consistent with their sin and misery. Edwards' two most intimate friends, however, seem to have felt the pressure of this question more than he did. They had read his Dissertation on Virtue, though it was not published till after the appearance of their essays on "The Wisdom of God in the Permission of Sin." They attempted to show that the existence of sin is consistent with the highest good, and Hopkins may be said to have considered it necessary to the highest good. Their views were not received with favor but served to render the New Divinity increasingly offensive. It has been maintained by theologians like Dr. Charles Hodge, and by some of the later New England theologians, that if sin is the necessary means of the greatest good, it is not in reality an evil. The essayists certainly did not consider sin a good in itself, but they did seem to extenuate its heinousness and open the way to the *inference* that it is a good and desirable thing. Their views have been compared with those of Leibnitz, as set forth in his Theodicy, published in 1710, and those of Pope, as expressed in his Essay on Man, published in 1733. But it is not probable that these works were familiarly known to the New England divines in the first half of the eighteenth century, and a careful study shows that they were conceived in a very different spirit from that manifested by our own countrymen. Indeed, Leibnitz's position that evil is incidental to a finite system, and sin, at least, not to be prevented, is akin to the suggestions of the later opponents of Hopkinsianism.

At the disruption of the Presbyterian Church in 1837 one heresy charged upon the New School and traced to New England, was:

“That God would have been glad to prevent the existence of sin in our world, but was not able without destroying the moral agency of man; or that, for aught that appears in the Bible, sin is incidental to any wise moral system.”¹

This sentiment was very strenuously opposed by the Hopkinsians. But we will turn to the essays themselves, published, one in 1758, the other in 1759.

Dr. Bellamy adheres persistently to the idea of permission in God’s relation to sin. He represents to himself God as standing by and forbearing to interpose where men carry out such of their sinful purposes as will contribute to his glory, while he represses all evil devices that are not necessary for his glory and the good of the universe. He argues his case mainly by the illustrations found in Scripture narratives. He cites the story of Joseph, the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and the life and death of Christ. He says:

“In all these instances of God’s permitting sin, he had a view to the manifestation of himself. They gave him opportunities to act out his heart; and so to show what he was, and how he stood affected; and he intended, by his conduct, to set himself, *i. e.*, all his perfections, in a full, clear and strong point of light; that it might be known that he was the Lord, and that the whole earth might be filled with

1. Schaff’s Herzog, I, p. 170.

his glory. And he intended to let his creatures give a true specimen of themselves; that it might be known what was in their hearts.”¹

Bellamy sees in sin not only the means by which the glory of God is manifested, but the means, also, by which the good of the universe is promoted :

“Had the posterity of Abraham lived quietly in the land of Canaan, and multiplied there for 470 years, the Canaanites dying off meanwhile, as the Indians do in America, they might have filled the land with a much greater number of inhabitants than when Joshua brought them in, and no Joseph sold; no infants drowned; no making bricks; no carcasses left in the wilderness, and they strangers to such great changes, trials and sorrows; but then God would not have had an opportunity for any of those wonderful works which he wrought, whereby it was known that he was the Lord, and the whole earth was filled with his glory, and a foundation laid for much good to that people, then, and in all succeeding generations; yea, to this day, the whole church of God reap the benefit of those wonderful works which were recorded for our instruction, on whom the ends of the world are come.”²

He does not, however, base his faith in the wisdom of permitting sin in the world upon the good effects which he can trace, but upon the divine character :

“Were there no particular instance in which we could see the wisdom of God in the permission of sin, yet, from the perfections of the divine nature alone,

1. Works II, p. 27. References to Bellamy's works are to the three volume edition of 1811.

2. II. p. 81.

we have such full evidence that he must always act in the wisest and best manner, as that we ought not in the least to doubt it.”¹

He infers, therefore, that the benefits of sin are found in other worlds as well as in this. The stability of the elect angels in righteousness he supposed to be confirmed by the terrible calamities that have befallen those who have apostatized from God.

Dr. Bellamy is very cautious, in his treatment of this subject, to exclude the idea that God can by any possibility be chargeable with sin. On the other hand he is represented as hating it, and clearly and earnestly counselling all moral beings to avoid it.

Hopkins is more bold and positive in his statements. His supralapsarianism comes out in its strongest form in treating of this subject. The existence of sin was a topic that seemed to fascinate him with a dismal but irresistible charm. He gave great prominence to the divine agency in its occurrence. He was as far as possible from holding that God commits sin, but, that he permits it, was too weak an expression for his idea. His own expressions will best communicate his thought. Of the present system of things, he says:

“As it must be the wisest and best possible plan, containing all the possible good that infinite wisdom and goodness could devise and desire, and omnipotence execute, it can not be altered in the most minute particular, or circumstance, to eternity.”² “There is, therefore, the greatest possible certainty, from the divine perfections that sin does exist just in the man-

1. Works, II, p. 35.

2. III., p. 735.

References to Hopkins' works are to the three volume edition of 1852.

ner and in that degree, and in every instance of it, with all the attendants and consequents of it which do or will take place, agreeably to the dictates of Infinite Wisdom and Goodness, as being necessary to accomplish the most wise and best end, the greatest possible good of the universe; and the sin and misery which are not necessary to promote this end, shall never exist, as it is contrary to Infinite Wisdom and Goodness that they should.'"¹

The importance of sin in promoting the highest good he sets forth in this way :

. . . "And though the effects of holiness and sin are in their nature, and considered in themselves, so infinitely different and contrary to each other, and the latter most odious and abominable, yet the existence of them both may be equally important and desirable, and necessary for the glory of God and the greatest possible good. It hence appears that God's disposition and will respecting it, which is the origin and cause of it, and his disposition and will revealed in his law requiring benevolence, and all that is implied in it, and forbidding the contrary, are perfectly consistent, and one and the same. And were it possible for him to will and to choose that sin should not exist, this would have been infinitely contrary to the divine laws."²

. . . "It is most evident to those who will impartially consider the matter, that God's holiness is as much exercised, and as really appears in his permitting sin, as in any of his conduct whatsoever."³

. . . "The more holy men are, and so, the more they hate sin, the more well pleased they are with God's permitting sin, and the more they fall in with his designs herein."⁴

1. III., p. 734.

2. I., p. 140.

3. II., p. 529.

4. II., p. 525.

Hopkins thus undertakes, not to justify, but to glorify God as the author of a system that involves the introduction of sin into the world. He does not discuss the further question whether it is right to create men destined through their own voluntary actions to sin and suffer, but he implies that God as a sovereign has that right.

“From all this it appears that God, being under no obligation to preserve any of His rational creatures from sinning, may, consistently with His righteousness, wisdom and holiness, order things so that any number of them shall become sinful, when this is most for His glory and the general good. Accordingly it was agreeable to His will and purpose that vast numbers of the angels should fall into sin; and had this will and purpose reached all of them, they would have had no reason to complain of any injustice or wrong done them.”¹

He proceeds to make the same remarks concerning men, and adds, that God had a right to connect the sin of man with the sin of Adam, as he has, or to have resorted to some other method if he had seen fit to secure the same result.

Rev. Stephen West, D.D., the immediate successor of President Edwards in Stockbridge, and one of the most noted adherents of the New England Theology, is quite as bold as Hopkins in maintaining the necessity of sin in the best moral system. He says:

“It must be a very peculiar stretch of imagination and thought, that can suppose the present system of events and administration is not, in all its parts,

the fruit of choice and wise design, and that in preference to all other systems possible or conceivable, and this it certainly could not be, unless some more wise and valuable ends were to be accomplished, than could have been brought to pass in a system wherein there was no moral evil."¹

Supralapsarianism seems sufficiently obvious in the following:

"If it is a desirable thing that hatred of the divine mind to sin should be manifested and appear, it was a desirable thing that there should be suitable objects towards whom this disposition of the divine mind might be manifested and appear. If it is a desirable thing that the hatred of the divine mind to sin should be exercised, it is of course a desirable thing that there should be some proper objects toward whom to exercise it. And on whom is it possible that God should exercise and manifest his hatred of sin, but the sinner? It is, therefore, in the nature of things, desirable that such beings as sinners should exist in the intelligent system; consequently a desirable thing that moral evil should come into existence."²

The same argument avails him to show that there must be sinners in order that God may have an opportunity to manifest his mercy. He was in the new theology a disciple of Hopkins and would have agreed with him in his view of the divine agency in the sinful deeds of men. Hopkins said that God might work in one way in the production of their holy deeds and in another in the production of their sinful deeds, but each class is connected with the divine *fiat*.

1. Moral Agency, p. 176.

2. Ibid., p. 204.

“If by God’s permitting sin be meant that sin will exist, if God do not interfere and hinder the existence of it by a positive exertion, and he only forbears such exertion, and suffers it to take place, this involves a real absurdity and impossibility, as it supposes sin to exist without any proper cause, and wholly independent of the first cause.”¹

The theological statesman, Governor John Treadwell, of Connecticut, (born 1745, died 1823) seems to have embraced supralapsarian views of sin. His theological sentiments were established by reading Edwards on the Will, but in some of his statements he went beyond his teacher’s expressions if not beyond his idea as to the necessity of sin. He says the general good requires that some creatures should be vessels of mercy and some vessels of wrath.² He says that sin and suffering do not militate against the goodness of God but rather increase and support the evidence of it. Suffering as penal is evidence of the prevalence of justice in the divine government, as monitory it is a deterrent from evil. And if suffering is evidence of the divine goodness then sin is like evidence, for it furnishes the ground of punishment or chastisement.³ He says :

“In order then to prove that the existence of sin makes anything against the goodness of God, it must be demonstrated that God himself cannot overrule it for the display of his glory or the happiness of his creatures.”⁴

1. I, p. 145.

2. Connecticut Evangelical Magazine, III, p. 46.

3. Ibid., II, pp. 405, 408.

4. Ibid., II, p. 405.

Most New England divines have been more guarded in their expressions on this subject. Emmons, who surpasses all others in his statements concerning the divine co-operation with man, says :

“So sin, in itself, does not make good, but it is that without which some good cannot take place. * * * And if it be possible in the nature of things for sin to be the occasion of good, then it is certain, from the rectitude of the divine character, that it will be so. God would neither introduce sin into the world, nor suffer it to exist, but for the wisest and best ends. * * * God will so order and govern the conduct of men, that no more sin shall exist than shall be the occasion of good.”¹

A current expression among New England divines who did not enter into public discussions, in adjusting their views upon this topic, came to be for a time, “sin is the necessary means of the greatest good.” Dr. Woods, professor of theology at Andover from 1808 to 1846, maintained this view. He was accustomed to say that God preferred sin to holiness in every instance of its actual occurrence. It was not asserted that he preferred it in itself considered, on the contrary his hatred of sin was asserted in the strongest terms, but all things considered, in every instance of its occurrence, he did prefer it to holiness. This may be considered the Hopkinsian doctrine. But there entered into New England theology from New Haven a new anti-Hopkinsian element so far as this point is concerned. N. W. Taylor, D. D., professor of divinity in the Yale

1. Vol. VI, p. 170.

References to Emmons are to the six volume edition of 1842.

Divinity School from 1822 to 1858, opposed very vehemently these two positions, that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good, and that God can prevent all sin in a moral system. He denied that God prefers sin to holiness under any circumstances; affirmed that he always prefers obedience to disobedience, else his commands and promises are not sincere; denied that sin is totally evil, if it is the necessary means of the greatest good.

But his affirmations in theodicy are not so positive as his denunciations. He quotes approvingly Dr. Dwight's reply to the question, "Why does God permit sin?" "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." In any further discussion of the topic he fell back upon the position that, it may be true that God cannot prevent all sin in a moral system. He maintained very strenuously that those who believe that sin can be prevented in a moral system make the positive assertion, and that on them rests the burden of proof, and that until they have brought forward their proof, they have no right to assert that it is the necessary means of the greatest good. He says sin may be incidental to any moral system. It must be possible, it may be actual. This, he thinks, differs *toto coelo* from the Hopkinsian view. Dr. Taylor's view will be noticed more fully hereafter. Since his day many Hopkinsians have rested with the assertion, God cannot prevent all sin in the best moral system.

Arminian divines like Richard Watson have brought the doctrine of redemption into their theodicy. They have argued that there is no injus-

tice in the divine permission of sin because the scheme of salvation is concurrent with it. The mission of Christ, so they teach, was no afterthought, but a provision for man's rescue, made before he entered on the career that was to lead to his fall.

Recent New England theologians have adopted similar views, looking to the future life to afford opportunities of deliverance from sin to all those to whom the Gospel of Christ had not been made known in this life. Lewis F. Stearns, professor of theology in Bangor Theological Seminary from 1881 to 1892, says :

"Sin is man's work, not God's, but God knew what he was about when he determined to permit a certain amount of it in his world. He meant to work out a higher manifestation of his love and a higher type of human character than would be possible without it, in a word to secure a greater good. Our great trouble in dealing with this subject is that we look at God's plan only in relation to sin, whereas we should look at it equally in its relation to redemption. * * * I believe it is a blessing to be brought into such a world and to have a chance to win its glorious prize, and this not only in spite of the risks, but even because of the risks."¹

The drift of thought at the present time may be indicated by these statements, but making the scheme of redemption a product of the divine justice cannot be said to be a part of New England Theology proper. The final outcome of this theology in its discussion of "the moral uses of dark things" probably does not differ from the former prevailing opin-

1. Present Day Theology, pp. 244, 245.

ion of the church, as expressed from time to time in its history, for instance, in Archbishop Leighton's sermon on "Grapes from Thorns," he says: "God is the absolute monarch of men's hearts, and works his own glory out of their attempts, while they strive most to dishonor him."

II.

THE NEW ENGLAND DOCTRINE OF SIN.

The epithet Edwardean is less applicable to the New England doctrine of sin than to any other prominent doctrine of its theology. Edwards opposed Pelagianism by affirming the doctrine of original sin. His successors have opposed it by other means and have not accepted his argument. Their assertion of the fact of human sinfulness and of an innate tendency to sin while they denied inherited sin, has led to much speculation and acute discriminations, but not to formulated statements that are received without questioning. Each theologian has desired to make his own explanations even where he avowed a substantial agreement with others. The Hopkinsian doctrine here is not simply that of Hopkins or of any individual, but the conglomerate teaching of many persons. There is, however, a trend of teaching common to the entire class of the theologians of which we are speaking. It will be necessary to cite several names in treating of this subject.

IN WHAT SIN CONSISTS.

1. *Sin as Transgression.* On this point there is a good degree of unanimity among our theologians,

and Hopkins' clear and comprehensive statements on the general subject find ready acceptance. He says:

“By the view we have had of the divine law and moral government, we may learn what is the rule of our duty now, and, consequently, what is sin in us, viz. every deviation of heart from the rule of duty, by omission of what it requires, or doing what it forbids.”¹

The law of which he here speaks is that imposed on man in his original state. He looks upon all other law as contained in this, and considers this the requirement of love to God and man. He says:

“We must, therefore, look into this perfect law and rule of duty, and no where else, in order to know what is our duty, and what is sin; and by this alone can we obtain the knowledge of, and ascertain our own moral character.”²

By omission the author does not mean simply the failure to perform a duty, but a voluntary neglect. With him omission is as truly active as transgression, is, in fact, a form of transgression.

“All sin consists in the nature and quality of the exercises which take place in a moral agent.”³

Some New England theologians have defined sin as “voluntary transgression of known law,” but Hopkins did not make guilt dependent on knowledge. He says, commenting on the Scripture reference to sinning ignorantly:

“Hence it appears that persons may be moral

1. I, p. 205.

2. I, p. 206.

3. I. p. 231.

agents, and sin without knowing what the law of God is, or of what nature their exercises are, and while they have no consciousness that their exercises are wrong.”¹

2. *Sin as Selfishness.* But the New England view of sin is not presented with its distinctive peculiarity through its relation to law. Its active nature and its motive force are more fully brought out by the assertion that all sin is selfishness. As these theologians tried to reduce virtue to a simple act, so they aimed to find one simple exercise of soul which should include all sin. Over against benevolence in which they found all virtue they set selfishness in which all sin is to be found. Selfishness is that self-love that gives self the first place. It is not the self-love that gives us an interest in the affairs of the world, nor that which results from the love of being in general, but the self-love which would subordinate all else to its own gratification. Of self-love thus understood, Hopkins says:

“It is in its whole nature, and in every degree of it, enmity against God. * * * This is, therefore, the fruitful source of every exercise and act of impiety and rebellion against God, and contempt of him that ever was or can be.”²

This view of sin, that it is selfishness and that it is the quality of an act not of a state, is the decidedly prevalent view in New England; exceptions, or apparent exceptions, will be noticed hereafter. When the term sinful is applied to a state it is used

1. I. p. 232.

2. III. p. 29.

figuratively, or it is intended to affirm that the state is such that under certain circumstances sinful deeds will flow from it. Dr. Bellamy says:

“Ever since our first parents aspired to be gods, it has been the nature of all mankind to love themselves supremely, and to be blind to the infinite beauty of the divine nature; and it remains so with all, until renewed by divine grace; so that self-love is the highest principle from which unregenerate men do ever act, or can act.”¹

Dr. Emmons, in summing up his work as a preacher, says:

“I have endeavored to show: that holiness and sin consist in free voluntary affections and exercises; that the posterity of Adam are guilty of no sin but their own free, voluntary, selfish affections; that sinners do not perform one holy and acceptable act until they exercise pure, disinterested love.”

Dr. N. W. Taylor gave his maturest thought to the doctrine of sin, and, though he gave a wider range to innocent self-love than some of the New England divines, was quite as positive as any in asserting that selfishness is the sum of sin. Professor Fisher thinks he made a valuable contribution to theology in treating of this topic. He made sin a transgression of known law, but taught that men sin carelessly, without comprehending the import of their conduct, and that it is only occasionally that they are impressed with the true nature of sin. When properly apprehended it is the elective preference of self

1. I. p. 195.

to God. This fact is not indeed recognized in the ordinary course of life, but careful reflection reveals that there is with all men a profound, permanent preference of self to God, and this preference is the sum of sin. Professor Fisher thinks this is a profound conception of the Augustinian stamp. This selfish principle Taylor considered the essential evil which calls forth the divine disapprobation, while its mere continuance—the same in kind and degree—does not increase its heinousness.¹

One of the most strenuous supporters of the active nature of sin is Professor Park. In replying to the criticisms of Dr. Hodge, he says:

“The speculations of our Edwardean divines on moral agency are a proof of their having adopted the maxim of common sense, that all sin consists in sinning. And here the great fact is, that they looked upon moral agency as essential to good or ill desert, and upon a moral agent as the only responsible being, and they frequently describe men as becoming sinners ‘as soon as they become moral agents,’ and not before. * * * Volumes might be filled with the repetitions which these men make of the assertion, that all sin is perverted free-agency, and that free-agency ‘consists in choosing, and in nothing else.’”²

These remarks are made in defence of a position which he had previously taken.

3. *Sin as an Inherent Tendency.* Among the successors of Edwards there has been a class of divines who have dissented from some of the later dogmas of

1. Moral Government, I. p. 174.

2. *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 1852, p. 194.

New England theology, and who have claimed to be the true representatives of Edwardianism. It was under their leading that the Theological Institute of Connecticut was planned in 1833. The movement was designed to counteract the influence of New Haven Theology—which will be noticed hereafter—but it sustained and advocated positive, as well as opposed what were deemed heretical, views. These theologians at times speak of sin as pertaining to states of the soul as well as to acts, yet they seem to imply an activity in connection with all sin. All New England theologians apply the term sinful to the moral bias of nature because it leads to sin, but many deny that it can be characterized as involving guilt or as actually sinful. Those who are sometimes called the Old School New England theologians seem to attribute guilt to acts or states prior to the acts considered sinful by the New School. Rev. E. A. Lawrence, D.D., in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* for 1863, says :

“The Old (school) affirms sin to be a wrong status or bias of the will, as well as a violation of known law.”

Yet he seems to conceive of the bias as in some degree active, it is a bias of the will and so voluntary. He explains more fully thus :

“The depravity of nature, the first sinfulness of the child, consists in this voluntary deflection of the will from God. It is not choice, for this implies antecedent knowledge of law, and a comparison of right and wrong, but it leads to choice, and is the generic moral *force* concentered and determined in

choice to a specific object. Hence we call a disposition to sin a sinful disposition. It is the primal force, the central dynamic oppugnancy to God which works itself out in all the actualities of evil.”¹

At the time of writing the article for the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Dr. Lawrence was professor of theology in the Theological Institute of Connecticut. Rev. Bennet Tyler, D. D., the first President, and first Professor of Christian Theology in the same institution, who, as his biographer states, “always professed to belong to the school of Edwards, Bellamy, Griffin, Dwight and Woods,” seems to imply that sin is active in its nature. Replying to the objection to the doctrine of native depravity, that it “is inconsistent with the accountability of man,” he says:

“This objection will be seen to have no weight, when we consider that mankind are free moral agents, notwithstanding their natures are depraved. The free agency of man was not impaired by the fall. Mankind are laid under no natural necessity to sin. They act under no compulsion. They are free to choose or refuse. Good and evil are set before them; and although they are naturally inclined to choose the evil, they do it as freely as Adam did the first time he sinned.”²

He, however, objects to Dr. Taylor’s view that man’s nature is not itself sinful and is not the cause, but only the occasion of sin, and says if man is born with a nature the same in kind as

1. p. 319.

2. *Memoirs and Lectures*, p. 201.

Adam's then there is no connection between the sin of Adam and that of his posterity.¹

AXIOMS CONCERNING SIN.

We may notice a few principles in connection with this topic taken for granted by the adherents of the New England Theology.

Sin consists in sinning. It is considered absurd to hold that sin can occur when nothing is done. Sin attaches to an agent, is the quality of a deed because of which quality the deed is condemned. The axiom denies that there is sin in a mere state of existence. If there is guilt in continuing in a certain state, it is because there is a voluntary persistence in remaining in that state, not because of the state itself. The axiom denies the doctrine of inherited sin. A heritage descends upon one without his agency, in coming into possession of which one is passive. There can be no guilt, it is claimed, in being passively the recipient of that which is thrust upon one without his knowledge or consent. If there is guilt and sin in connection with an inheritance, it is in appropriating it,—availing one's self of it, not in being made its possessor.

Another axiom may be stated thus: sin is to be charged to an individual will. Only a will can sin, and every will must be right or wrong in its conduct. It is held that in moral agency and responsibility each will is independent, there is an absolute severance of the will of the child from that of the parent, and there is no possibility of so

1. Letters on New Haven Theology, pp. 13, 14.

merging the individual will in a corporate will as to destroy personal and individual responsibility. The axiom denies imputed sin. It is inconsistent with the very nature of sin to attribute to one the wrongdoing of another.

Another axiom is: Obligation,—and of course sin,—is limited by ability. It is held that one cannot be required to do what he has no power to do. So firmly is this position maintained that the ability to repent and love God is attributed to the unaided will of man, because it is his duty to repent and love God. It is admitted that this never was done by the unaided will, never will be done, is a moral impossibility, yet it can be done, for ability is equal to obligation.

Another of the New England axioms is: The cause of sin cannot itself be sin, or be sinful. Dr. N. W. Taylor used frequently to appeal to this principle, and say every one knows its truthfulness as well as he knows his own existence. This statement is applied more particularly to the first sin. The thought may perhaps be more definitely stated thus: The sinfulness of an act is not to be ascribed to its cause. Dr. Stephen West makes use of this principle frequently in his treatise on Moral Agency. He says:

“To place the essence of virtue and vice, not in their nature, but in their cause, excludeth all possibility of sin, and denies it to be conceivable that any such event should ever take place. According to this argument, whatever hath a cause cannot be sinful, for the sinfulness of anything lieth, not in the

nature of it, but in its cause. That which hath not a cause, but is self-existent, cannot be sinful, for this as well as other reasons, that sinfulness doth not lie in the nature of things, but in their cause. But this, by supposition, having nothing but its nature, or what is to be found in the nature of it, predicable of it; it being itself without a cause; can for this reason have no vice charged to its account. That which is an effect cannot be vicious, because the viciousness of anything is to be charged to its cause.”¹

This principle is made of service in showing that God, while he foreordains and controls sin, is not himself sinful.

ACCEPTED FACTS RELATING TO SIN.

There are some facts concerning sin which New England divines are agreed upon and accept, but accept as established by experience rather than as involved in their view of sin. One of these facts is its universality. Pelagians teach that Christ is not the only guiltless member of the human family, or that it may be he is not, but the New England theology, though sometimes charged with Pelagianizing tendencies, has always been unequivocal in its assertion of the fact that all who have attained to moral agency are sinners.

This involves another fact, which yet deserves a separate statement, viz: that the first moral act of every human being is sinful. Hopkins says:

“A child, an infant, as soon as he exists, may have moral corruption or sin. As soon as he has any mental motion, which is of the nature of inclina-

1. Moral Agency, p. 81.

tion, this motion, disposition or inclination may be wrong, and have in it the foundation and seeds of every sin, being of the same nature with the sinful motions and inclinations of the hearts of adult persons. These motions, though invisible and unperceived by us, do really, and in the sight of the omniscient Being, fix the actual moral character of the child, which discovers itself to men as it has opportunity, and there is capacity to express it in actions and words.”¹

Dr. Emmons said it was as easy to account for the sin of a child as of an adult; that God could as well create a sinful volition in one as in the other. Dr. Taylor denied the sinfulness of infants. He differed here with the New England school. The difference, however, was as to the commencement of moral agency. Dr. Smalley, who agreed in some points with the old Calvinists, said :

“They (children) evidently discover some of the same depraved dispositions while in their mother’s arms, which are more terribly acted out when arrived to riper years.”²

Another doctrine accepted as a fact by these theologians is the total depravity of mankind. Emmons said it had been the aim of his ministry to teach that the hearts of sinners are by nature totally depraved. That sinners do not perform one holy and acceptable act until they exercise pure, disinterested love. Hopkins says :

“Mankind are born totally corrupt and sinful in consequence of the apostasy of Adam. That is,

1. I. p. 224.

2. Sermons, 2, p. 295.

they have naturally, as the children of Adam, no degree or kind of moral rectitude, and their hearts are full of moral evil.”¹

Taylor taught the same doctrine, though he took pains to distinguish it from native depravity. This doctrine is held in a way to satisfy New England theologians when it is held that each moral act of the unrenewed man is in some degree sinful. There are deficiencies in all the acts of the unregenerate, whatever excellences they may possess, which exclude them from the class of holy deeds. If an agent is not in the right relation to God his act is not in a right relation. It has been maintained by some, as President Finney, that every unrenewed man is as bad as he can be, but this is no necessary part of the doctrine.

The dependence of the regenerate on divine grace in every good deed proves the total depravity of the natural man as clearly as his defective morals prove it.

Another accepted fact is that the sins of all men are alike. All have the same tendencies of heart, and all sin in the same way. There is the same selfishness, greed, intemperance, self-indulgence the world over, checked and modified, indeed, in degree, but the same in kind wherever men are found.

ORIGINAL SIN

The New England view of original sin does not require prolonged treatment. It is simple and modest, and does not attempt philosophical explanations. It accepts the doctrine of native depravity, admits

1. I, p. 226.

that sin pertains to the race, accepts the Scripture doctrine, that by one man sin entered into the world, makes the sin of Adam the occasion of the sin of all his posterity and holds all actual sin to be the result of an inherited disposition. It gives to this evil disposition the designation of original sin, except that Dr. Emmons applied the term to the eating of the forbidden fruit.

On the other hand these theologians denied that original sin was really and truly sin, but considered it a tendency toward wrong, in itself innocent. This view was entertained by those who held to a substantial basis with inherent tendencies as constituting the soul. But Hopkins and Emmons carried their "exercise scheme" so far as to make these tendencies exercises and to absorb what is commonly called original sin in actual sin. Hopkins says:

"Original sin is that total moral depravity which takes place in the hearts of all the children of Adam, in consequence of his apostasy, which consists in exercise or act, as really as any sin can do, and therefore cannot be distinguished from actual sin."¹

Again he infers from his doctrine of original sin.

"That the children of Adam are not guilty of his sin, are not punished, and do not suffer for that, any further than they implicitly or expressly approve of his transgression by sinning as he did; that their total moral corruption and sinfulness is as much their own sin, and as criminal in them as it could be if it were not in consequence of the sin of the first father of the human race, or if Adam had not first sinned."²

1. I., p. 224.

2. I., p. 235.

Emmons was not behind Hopkins in applying the exercise scheme. He says:

“When God forms the souls of infants, he forms them with moral powers, and makes them men in miniature. And being men in miniature, he works in them as he does in other men, both to will and to do of his good pleasure; or produces those moral exercises in their hearts, in which moral depravity properly and essentially consists.”¹

Both Hopkins and Emmons, in these extreme statements of the exercise principle, use language that implies the existence of powers before the sinful exercise of them. Hopkins says that depravity takes place in the hearts of men, and Emmons speaks of souls possessed of powers, before the divine working upon them which produces sin. So they with other New England divines held to the existence of powers in a state of innocence but sure to sin in their first activity, — that is, activity of a moral character. The evil tendencies of these powers are commonly spoken of as original sin, but the two divines just mentioned applied the term to specific acts, and therefore made original sin actual sin.

The New England divines,—those who would be classed as strictly of the New School,—denied that man’s depravity came from Adam, separated men from the first father, as to moral character, and made each individual’s sinfulness begin with himself. They denied the Pelagian doctrine that every man begins life in the condition of the unfallen Adam, but affirmed, on the contrary, that his state at birth is

1. IV., p. 357.

that of fallen and apostate humanity, denying, however, the Augustinian explanation that men fell in Adam, holding that each person stands or falls for himself alone. They denied also the covenant theory of the fall. They considered the idea that we fall through our representative not proved, and really based upon a wrong view of God's government. They rejected also Edwards' theory of a divinely constituted oneness of Adam and his posterity. This theory they considered fanciful and far-fetched. They however retained the word "constituted," which Edwards had used, and affirmed man's fallen state to be a divine constitution. Hopkins says:

"That God connected the sinfulness of Adam's posterity with his first sin by a just, wise and good constitution."

Here the New England philosophy of native depravity and original sin ends. How is it that the race is sinful? God so constituted it that it would be.

THE EXERCISE AND TASTE SCHEMES.

The speculative scheme of doctrine known as the exercise scheme grew out of the view of sin as active in its nature, or perhaps of sin and holiness as active in their nature. In opposition to it was set forth the taste scheme. The two terms stand in contrast but designate, not so much different theological doctrines, as summations of doctrines based on different philosophical views. In the exercise scheme all moral qualities are considered active, not only emotions and passions, but a bias, a tendency, a disposition is considered an exercise. So far perhaps most

New England theologians could agree or compromise their differences, but when we go beyond these qualities some would say there is a faculty of the soul, a positive entity in which the bias, or tendency, or disposition inheres, others pass immediately from these and from all moral activities to the divine action upon the soul. A divine activity takes the place of spiritual substance as far as heart action is concerned. It may be that some would claim to hold to the exercise scheme who do not accept this view of the connection between divine and human action, but the full and complete scheme involves the connection as above stated. Dr. Emmons, the leader of the adherents of the exercise scheme, says:

“The heart, therefore, which is the seat of moral exercises, consists in nothing but moral exercises. It certainly does not consist in perception, or reason, or conscience, or memory; for these are all natural faculties, which are totally destitute of every moral quality to which praise or blame can be attached; but it may and does consist in loving and hating, in choosing and refusing; for these are free, voluntary exercises, which are always right or wrong, and worthy of praise or blame. Neither reason nor Scripture affords any ground to suppose that the heart consists in a principle, or disposition, or taste, which is the root, or source, or foundation of all free and voluntary exercises.”¹

. . . “It is God who worketh in men both to will and to do. Moral exercises flow from a divine operation upon the mind of a moral agent, and not from any natural faculty, principle or taste, enabling him to originate his own internal exercises, or ex-

1. Works, VI. p. 408.

ternal actions. And as no other heart than that which consists in moral exercises is necessary, in order to men's doing good or evil, so no other heart is conceivable." ¹

Rev. Asa Burton, D.D., born in 1752, pastor of the Congregational Church in Thetford, Vt., from 1779 till his death in 1836, was the divine whose name is most prominently connected with the taste scheme. He was one of the ablest theologians of his day, and much resembled President Edwards in his method of argumentation and in his general view of the Christian doctrines. He uses the word taste as a synonym of heart, and says:

"The taste, or heart, is a feeling faculty."
 . . . "The heart is a complex faculty, composed of a number of appetites united. * * * The appetites of the heart are the principles of action, which set all the wheels in motion. They govern the understanding and the will, and all our external actions. Take these away and men would not be agents, and good and evil could not be imputed to them." ²

He probably had Emmons in mind when he wrote the following:

"On supposition the heart is not a faculty, and is nothing but those exercises, which many call immanent and imperate in succession, it is very evident on this ground that men must be in a state of indifference previous to choice, and the influence of motives is excluded. * * * Hence the defenders of the exercise scheme and Arminians must agree in two particulars. First, that voluntary exercises may

1. Works, V, p. 138. 2. Essays, p. 167.

exist, when the mind is in a state of perfect indifference; and secondly, that motives have no influence in choosing; or that the influence of motives is wholly excluded. And of course the only difference in this particular, between Arminians and those on the exercise scheme, respects the cause of voluntary exercise. The former say, it is produced by a self-determining power in man; the latter say, it is produced by the immediate agency of God.”¹

It is probable that most of the New England Calvinists at the present time would accept the taste scheme to the extent implied in the following language of President Dwight:

“The Spirit of God does not, in my view, when he regenerates mankind, create in them any volition whatever; but merely communicates to them the relish for spiritual objects, which has been here mentioned. * * * The relish for spiritual objects is that which in the Scriptures is called a new heart, a right spirit, an honest and good heart, a spiritual mind, and denoted by several other names of a similar import.”²

EMMONSISM.

This is the proper place to refer to Emmonsism, though the term came into use at a later date than that of the discussions above noticed, and never designated a scheme of theology. It was an intense development of a single point of Hopkinsianism, and of Edwardeanism as well. Emmons' predecessors did not treat of the point as directly as he, but his view is really implied in some of their assertions. All these theologians, including Emmons himself, at

1. pp. 204, 205.

2. Theology II, pp. 419, 420.

times use expressions hardly consistent with the view, but on the whole it may be attributed to them. The term is applied to the co-operation of God and man in all human moral conduct. It is held that any work of man—it is sufficient here to say any moral work—is performed by God and by man, may be attributed to either, and that men are responsible for the deed, while God performs it in fulfilment of his own purposes. Consequently men may be required to perform any moral duty without the assurance that God will work with them, but with the assurance that they will only do it by his working with them. Dr. Jacob Ide, in his *Memoir*, says:

“Dr. Emmons discovered, what it is strange no one ever discovered before, that man is active while acted upon. * * * He believed that God exercised a real, a universal and a constant agency over all his intelligent creatures, and that at the same time they enjoyed the most perfect freedom conceivable.”¹

Dr. Emmons says of Adam:

“His first sin was a free voluntary exercise, produced by a divine operation in view of motives. Satan placed certain motives before his mind, which, by a divine energy took hold of his heart and led him into sin.”²

In the immediate connection he says:

“Moral agents can never act but only as they are acted upon by a divine operation.”

1. Emmons' Works, I, lxxix.

2. Ibid., IV., p. 356.

The new school divines did not all adopt this view though it grows naturally out of Hopkinsianism and is akin to much that Edwards wrote. Dr. Smalley wrote an elaborate criticism of this scheme, which will be found in the appendix to his volume of sermons, published at Middletown in 1814. Rev. Thomas Andrus, a pastor at Berkeley, Mass., wrote in opposition to the peculiar views of Emmons. He says the term New England divine has become well-nigh a reproach in Old England; says he remembers when Dr. Emmons' sermon on Phil. 2:12, was handed around in manuscript, and it was said "the world was not yet ready to receive it." He avows himself a new divinity man, but protests against the idea that "God operates directly on the mind to incite men to yield to the allurements to sin." Still this view was tolerated by the later Hopkinsians and was recognized as growing out of their system. Professor Park, in his Memoir of Hopkins, says:

"As early, then, as 1767, the germ of Emmonism was found in the New Divinity."

Referring to a letter of Dr. Hopkins to Dr. West, Prof. Park adds:

"This letter proves that the Exercise Scheme, which *took no notice of* (whether or not it allowed the existence of) any nature or state back of the will, was not an invention of Dr. Emmons."¹

It can be safely maintained that the doctrine of divine efficiency—the prevalence of the Infinite Will

1. Hopkins' Works, I. p. 200.

—coming down from Edwards, with the “improvements” which followed, especially those concerning the active nature of sin and virtue, involved the scheme known as Emmonsism.

It is hardly necessary to refer to the life of Emmons, so well known is he to all who are interested in Congregationalism. For the sake of definiteness as to prominent facts, the following may not be unacceptable: Nathanael Emmons was born at East Haddam, Conn., April 20, 1745, was graduated at Yale College in 1767, was licensed to preach in 1769, and settled as pastor in Franklin, Mass., 1773. His active pastorate in that church embraced twenty-seven years in the last century and twenty-seven in the present century. He retained the pastoral relation till his death in 1840. He studied theology with Rev. Nathan Strong, of Coventry, Conn., and afterwards with Dr. John Smalley. He was at first inclined to Arminianism, then adopted the views of the Old Calvinists, but under the teaching of Smalley became a Hopkinsian. He combined great acuteness of intellect with capacity for prolonged labor and methodical habits of study, and became, probably, the most facile sermonizer that New England has ever produced. He was an enigma to his own generation as he has been to his followers. Some have thought he made the soul a series of exercises, others have denied it. Some have thought he made God the author of sin, others have defended him as not going beyond the ordinary doctrine of decrees; he taught that God creates all holy affections in the hearts of men, but when asked

why he could not create them in the back of a chair, he thought the question too silly to be answered. But we could wish that he had pointed out the limitations of creative power. He taught that it is as easy for a sinner to obey God as to perform any other act, and that he is guilty for not doing so, yet taught that to suppose he could obey except as God created the obedience, was to suppose him to be divine.

His conversation was fascinating, his friends loved to sit with him in his leisure hours and listen to his pithy remarks, yet there seems to have been some risk in presuming on a friendly acquaintance or in indulging too much curiosity. Some of his repartees seem to have been blunt rather than sharp or witty. His tendency of mind was strongly theological, he was the instructor of eighty-seven young men who entered the ministry. His sermons doctrinal, political, biographical, will always be of interest to intelligent readers. His works have been published in carefully prepared editions, once in 1842, again in 1861, each time in six large octavo volumes. Each edition was accompanied by an extended biography.

III.

RESPONSIBILITY.

When Edwards came to the rescue of Calvinism he drew out at great length the distinction between natural and moral ability, or, more strictly, between natural and moral inability. The Arminians asked; how, if the will is controlled by motives, can one be

responsible for his choices? They said, the will must be free, have control over its choices, or one should not be held accountable for them. This ever-living question Edwards treated in this way: when one is unable to perform a deed because of a lack of natural power, he is not responsible for the performance of it, but when he is unable because of a disinclination to perform it, he is responsible, and his disinclination is no excuse for his failure. In this case the inability is a moral one, for the man could do the work if he had a mind to. Edwards held that we fail in our religious duties simply because of a moral inability. Although the causes in the moral and religious world are as surely effective as physical causes, still they do not lessen the responsibility of the one under their power. One has the faculties in the exercise of which he can love his neighbor as himself, therefore he has no excuse for not so loving even his worst enemy, though he cannot prevail upon himself to do it. Edwards' successors have adopted his views and made large and continued use of them. The distinction between natural and moral inability, though it did not originate with Edwards, has been so appropriated and put to service by his successors that it seems almost a possession of New England. That the moral character of a deed is in its nature, or is an inherent quality, and is not to be traced to its source, has become an axiom.

DR. SMALLEY'S EXPOSITION OF RESPONSIBILITY.

These thoughts have been elaborated by our theologians again and again, but Dr. John Smalley, by

general consent, has presented the fullest and most cogent argument on this subject, and we may accept his treatise as the substance of all that has been written upon it. Prof. Park says of the two sermons in which he presented his views, that they had an epochal influence. They were received with favor in England as well as in this country. The substance of them is to be found in No. 26 of the Doctrinal Tracts of the Boston Tract Society, from which the following summation of his views is taken. His main object is, first, to show the utter helplessness of men while justly required to comply with the demands of the gospel, and, second, to lead them to trust in Christ for salvation. He says:

“There is a difficulty in the minds of many, how to reconcile the total helplessness of sinners with the sincerity of the gospel call, or with the justice of men’s being condemned and punished for their impenitence and unbelief. And indeed it does seem as if men could not be to blame for not doing impossibilities; nor should we in other cases think there was much kindness or sincerity in offering a favor on conditions that were known to be impracticable.”¹

And he adds :

“Until this difficulty can be fairly got over in the minds of people, it seems impossible they should, in their consciences, justify God, or condemn themselves as he condemns them; or that they should understand either the justice of the divine law or the grace of the gospel.”²

1. p. 1.

2. p. 2.

He thinks the difficulty can be removed only by recourse to the fact that there are two entirely different senses in which men are incapable of performing an act; one may be under a natural inability, or he may be under a moral inability, to perform the deed.

These are "so different, that the one, however great, does not lessen moral obligation in the least; whereas the other, so far as it obtains, destroys obligation, and takes away all desert of blame and punishment entirely. Moral inability consists only in the want of a heart, or disposition, or will to do a thing. Natural inability consists in, or arises from, want of understanding, bodily strength, opportunity, or whatever may prevent our doing a thing when we are willing, and strongly enough disposed to do it."¹

The doctrine of Smalley is that this moral inability renders one as incapable of performing a deed as natural inability does, yet furnishes no excuse for its non-performance.

"It is certain that want of a heart or inclination to do a thing, may be, and is, as inconsistent with our doing it, as anything else could be. Covetousness is as inconsistent with liberality as poverty is, and may as effectually hinder a man from doing deeds of charity."²

The necessity imposed upon us by moral ability or inability is expressed thus:

"Our free and moral actions are, and must be, as invariably guided and dictated by our minds, as they are limited and bounded by our natural power.

1. p. 6.

2. p. 8.

That is, every one must act out his own nature and choice; otherwise he does not act himself; he is not an agent."¹

. . . "Sinners of the most exalted genius and strength of mind are certainly no more able to make themselves new creatures than the weakest are. And the reason of this is as obvious as the fact is certain, viz: because whatever strength any one has, he always lays it out according to his own heart, and not contrary to it. Consequently all the strength of men and angels, yea even omnipotence itself, if the sinner had the direction of it, would never make him good."²

Still Smalley holds that this moral necessity is no extenuation of the sinner's guilt. He asks:

"Because a man must act according to his own heart, or as he pleases, does this destroy his freedom? It is the very thing in which all free agency consists."³

. . . "An inability, therefore, to act otherwise than according to our own minds, is only an inability to act otherwise than as free agents."⁴

. . . "A man's heart being fully set in him to do evil, does not render his evil actions the less criminal; nor does the strength of a virtuous disposition render a good action the less, but the more, amiable, and worthy of praise."⁵

This is the position on which he plants himself: that men are responsible for their conduct because they do as they please, and that it is no extenuation of their conduct in wrong doing that only the wrong pleases them, that they are so constituted that the

1. p. 8. 2. p. 22. 3. p. 9. 4. p. 19. 5. p. 10.

right cannot please them, and that such is the nature of morals that one's pleasure, or preference, or prevailing inclination, or will, determines character,—the will is the deed. This view he defends earnestly and determinedly. He does not admit that the unregenerate man may be excused for failing in deeds that imply real holiness of heart, while he is inexcusable for neglect of duties which he can perform, such as prayer and the study of the Scriptures. He says that either the natural abilities of men are the measure of their duty or their moral ability is the measure. That moral power should be the measure of duty is absurd, for then a want of inclination would excuse one from doing anything he does not do, and there would be no such thing as blame and desert of punishment.

He does not admit that there is any force in the plea which men sometimes make, "That they did not bring their depravity upon themselves, but were born with it. If their hearts are altogether sinful, they did not make them so, nor is it their fault; they have only such hearts as were given them, without their choice or consent." This argument, he says, makes sin simply a weakness, overlooks the fact that a wicked heart is faulty in its own nature; implies that it is no sin to be a sinner, but that the sin is in producing the sinful disposition. It really makes the first sin the only sin, and Adam guilty because he sinned with a holy heart. "We conceive Adam to blame, because of the uprightness of his heart; and ourselves blameless because our hearts are so wicked."¹

Smalley also affirms, that it is nothing in the sinner's favor, no extenuation of guilt, that he is unable to change his own heart. The idea of his changing his heart implies again, as he holds, that sin is a misfortune. It supposes that an evil disposition is an object on which one can work for the purpose of effecting a change, without regarding the fact that it is the principle from which one works. This idea supposes that an evil disposition is a misfortune which one may strive to remove, while it is really a force which is continually acting out its nature. Acting out self is serving self instead of God, and is therefore sinful, and it never can suppress and exterminate itself,—rather it promotes itself—therefore one is helpless in his sin. The inability and the sin are inseparably bound together.

These views seem to accord with extreme Hopkinsianism—to be noticed hereafter,—in demanding, that a holy heart be sought in a holy way, or that the pursuit of righteousness proceeds from a righteous heart, as a life of sin proceeds from a wicked heart. In accord with this position, he says:

“There can be no reasonable objection against God, because he gives no promise of salvation on lower terms than an actual compliance with the gospel.”

He repels with impatience the thought which many entertain, that God mocks men in their misery by offering salvation on such a condition, when “he knows that no unregenerate sinner can come up to such terms, any more than he can make a world.”¹

Yet his exhortations and assurances addressed to the impenitent seem to be founded on ideas at variance with an absolute inability and to accord with some of the appeals of President Edwards which have been already alluded to. He says in reference to the instructions to be given to the impenitent:

“It is easy to direct them to the course they *ought* to take; and it would be easy to put them in a way in which they might have great reason to hope for salvation, if they thought it a matter worth taking pains about, and were of a teachable spirit and willing to follow good advice.”¹

After this he falls back into his Hopkinsianism again. Later he seems to take both sides in these words:

“Nor need you be discouraged by reason of any bad disposition brought upon you by Adam, which you are heartily sorry for, and would be glad to be rid of, but cannot. For the second Adam is able to help you in this as well as in other respects; and will do it in a moment, if you in the least degree really desire it.”²

Logical consistency would require him to demand of every man to live, from this instant, without aid, in the exercise of his natural ability, a holy life from the promptings of a holy heart.³

DR. SMALLEY AND GOVERNOR TREADWELL.

Dr. Smalley was considered the chief expounder of the doctrines of ability and inability after the

1. p. 45.

2. p. 47.

3. p. 39.

publication of his two sermons on that subject in 1769. During his long pastorate in New Britain, from 1757 to 1810, perhaps till near his death, at the age of eighty-six, in 1820, he was regarded an authoritative teacher of the new divinity. His many pupils in theology entertained for him the highest esteem. Dr. Leonard Bacon has referred to him as belonging to the small class of theologians who, going beyond scholastic attainments, are known as original thinkers. More than thirty years after the publication of the above named sermons he was looked to as the proper person to reply to certain published articles of Governor Treadwell. In the year 1806 the Governor had sent forth, through the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine, a series of articles on moral inability, which caused no small sensation. He began his first article by referring to the generally accepted position that the change in man in the new birth is moral not physical; that it is predicable of the will and affections only, and not of the intellect or other natural faculties. He adds:

“But though the change in its main character be moral, it will not follow that there is no change in the nature of the subject as the ground of holy affections, and if such change be supposed, it must be admitted that so far it is physical.”¹

He says again:

“Agency or volition producing a visible effect is not so properly holiness or sin as the evidence of it.”²

1. Connecticut Evangelical Magazine, VI, p. 361.

2. Ibid, VI, p. 368.

In summing up his work in reply to opponents he says:

“It was the writer’s main object to state the inability of the sinner to love and serve God and to show that he is blameworthy and accountable, even on the supposition that a physical as well as a moral change were necessary to enable him to do so.”¹

He held that blame does not rise from power to do otherwise if a wrong act is performed, but from this, that one’s temper is itself evil. “Nothing seems necessary to blameworthiness but that the subject should be capable of the knowledge of God, and should in fact be destitute of love to him and to his creatures.” The love here demanded he did not consider an act of will or a product of will, but held that “our affections are what they are by a law of nature which is independent of our volitions and prior to them.” He carried out fully the theory that the blameworthiness of an act or state is in its nature, not in its cause. The tenor of the articles before us carries the impression that Governor Treadwell was apprehensive, that the doctrine of natural ability to repent, and the doctrine that moral inability is simply unwillingness, would lead men to think they could repent at any time. The falsity and danger of this impression he desired to expose. He became aware that his first article had roused the feelings of theologians and awakened some opposition, and he published a second article five months later, explaining and confirming the positions he had

1. Connecticut Evangelical Magazine, VII, p. 204.

already taken. The latter article contains nothing essentially new.

One month after the appearance of the second article Dr. Smalley, then in his seventy-third year, made a brief reply to the essays of Governor Treadwell. In his view the Governor had set aside the distinctions between natural and moral inability, had failed to make natural inability an adequate excuse for the non-performance of a proposed act, had failed to attribute man's entire guilt to his moral inability. This he considered dangerous teaching. He said, if there is no difference between wickedness and weakness in excusing human conduct all is midnight darkness. The author of the essays had said that the doctrine that natural inability excuses must be taken with limitations. The reviewer said it would be injustice in God to require of men that which they had no ability to perform. He said :

“It is very necessary that sinners should be made sensible, not only that they have not *every* kind of power, perfectly to keep the commandments of God, or truly to comply with the gospel while unregenerate, but also that they have some kind of power to do both, whether regenerate or not.”¹

The power they possess is the natural ability which God has bestowed upon them, their inability is the carnal heart which is enmity against God. Men are excusable for failing to do that for which they have no natural ability, and this principle avails without limitation, they are not excusable for

1. Connecticut Evangelical Magazine, VII, p. 121.

failing in that for which enmity of heart disables them. If one were not to blame for the inability which his wickedness produces, then his sin would be his justification, and the worse his character the more innocent he would be. The distinction, therefore, between natural and moral inability is a sound one, and one which should be rigorously maintained. He admitted that this distinction is not of consequence as "affording relief to those dead in sin or information how, by their own efforts, to become alive to God," but of great consequence in vindicating the justice of God in his dealings with men. The inability of the sinner to turn to God is as absolute as it would be if it were natural, but since it is simply his own sin his condemnation is just.

Dr. Smalley considered the doctrine of moral inability a most humiliating one. It is, as he thought, most repulsive to the sinner, since it abases his pride most profoundly, but it should be preached boldly since it is the most direct means of leading one to self-renunciation.

"A heart-felt conviction of one's total helplessness and utter inexcusableness at the same time and in the same respects, is therefore the last preparatory step in order to a sinner's being brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light by the renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Governor Treadwell had used the word physical to describe the change in regeneration, had spoken of moral inability as rising from nature and had said:

"If there is no connection between the doings of the unregenerate and spiritual blessings or a new

heart, (which he took for granted) then the impotency of sinners is physical as well as moral.”¹

Dr. Smalley did not think it necessary to use the term physical in speaking of the change effected in regeneration, he said we do not speak of God’s moral attributes as physical, and he can produce moral effects in the human soul, immediately which are not to be considered physical. We are not to compare the soul to the soil or to vegetables; to speak of it as good-natured or ill-natured is designating its moral not physical quality. In the use of the word *physical* neither of these writers was sufficiently explicit, especially may this be said of Dr. Smalley.

Governor Treadwell wrote a third article making a brief reply to the strictures of his reviewer, in which he re-affirmed his positions but added nothing material to his previous utterances. He made it evident, however, that he thought the reviewer had not been wholly complimentary in his incidental allusions.

Professor Denison Olmsted, of Yale College, published an article on Governor Treadwell in the American Quarterly Register, in February, 1843. He inserted in this paper a sketch of the religious life and character of Governor Treadwell, prepared by Dr. Porter, of Farmington, who had been the Governor’s pastor for nearly twenty years. Dr. Porter, in alluding to the discussion just noticed, intimates that Dr. Smalley’s paper was not considered very satisfactory, and asks, How could he reply to the positions taken by the Governor? He says both believed

1. Connecticut Evangelical Magazine, VII, p. 91.

that man's depravity does not consist primarily in the want of will to obey God, but in a state of mind, a constitutional bias which gives direction and character to acts of the will.¹ Governor Treadwell believed this and believed that the inability here involved was physical and natural. Dr. Porter expressed the opinion that the two disputants really agreed, except that the civilian-theologian called things by their right names.

Wherever the truth may have been in this case, there can be no doubt that Dr. Smalley's positions were the Edwardean positions, and that they were clearly and strongly stated.

The view of responsibility which has now been presented, has not been satisfactory to all theologians, not even to all New England theologians. There is a reluctance to admit that responsibility is to be utterly separated from causality. In what did the virtue of the good Samaritan consist? Was it simply in being moved with compassion that he differed from the priest and the Levite? Did his virtue reach its acme and become complete while he was passively influenced by an object of pity, before he had put forth any act of freedom? Edwards answers this question in the affirmative, and is much praised by his son for discovering that the moral character of a deed lies in its nature, not in its cause. Dr. Stephen West coincided with this view and it has at times been affirmed by the leading theologians of the Edwards school. The doctrine is by no means confined to the Eastern States. Dr.

1. See page 239.

Hodge says: "Malignity is evil and love is good, whether concreated, innate, acquired or infused."

But it is an irrepressible tendency of the mind to connect moral character with a causal force, with an energy that, with design, is the efficient cause of the moral act. It is not granted by all and at all times that a motive like pity or love is the sole cause of a moral act, but it is maintained that there is a spiritual subjective force in the agent to which causation may be attributed. It is held by many that we stood our probation in Adam, and that he brought guilt on himself and his posterity by an act performed when left to the freedom of his own will, the guilt of his free deed, due to his causative and originating force, being imputed to us, since he was our representative and covenant head. Even New England theologians retain and make frequent use of these terms *representative* and *covenant head*, though their scheme of doctrine does not require it.

The Augustinian doctrine also traces guilt to a causative force, attributes the origin of it not to the individual but to the race as embodied in Adam and including each individual. It is maintained by the adherents of this system that in no other way can innate sinfulness be made to appear consistent with justice in the Divine Ruler.

Many New England theologians have based responsibility upon the power of contrary choice. Their teaching is that in any given circumstances the choice might have been different, everything but the choice remaining unchanged. The doctrine is, that when the desires and inclinations are fixed and

the constitutional preferences established, the contrary of that which is chosen might be chosen. This doctrine has been assailed as identical with the Arminian scheme of self-determination. It has been defended, in reply to this charge, by teaching that the power to the contrary is not such as to interfere with the certainty that the choice will be as the greatest apparent good. And this is now the widely accepted view of New England men,—certainty with power to the contrary. Dr. N. W. Taylor was a leader in the use of this phrase: "Certainty with power to the contrary." He used to say a man can do differently if he will, and if he will not, but held that motives fixed the choice with certainty. But this moral certainty carries the doctrine back to that of Edwards and makes the scheme simply that of determinism. It does not find any place for what Whitby called freedom from necessity. But these illustrations are referred to simply to show that the mind does not rest satisfied with the assertion that the moral quality of an act is in the nature of the act itself.

INFLUENCE OF NEW ENGLAND THEOLOGY IN GREAT BRITAIN.

As the distinction between natural and moral ability and inability was made serviceable by certain theologians in England, and as it was suggested to them by American authors, this may be the proper place to notice the influence of New England theology in the mother country. It is well known that the writings of Edwards early attracted attention in Scotland, and that he had several correspondents and many warm friends there; but the reference here is

not to friendship, it is rather to the influence he exerted through the special doctrines which he taught. As a thinker he called forth the highest admiration of men who were not specially interested in American affairs. Sir James Mackintosh speaks of "his power of subtile argument, perhaps unmatched, certainly unsurpassed, among men." Robert Hall, who strenuously opposed his view of virtue, and made sport of his distinction between natural and moral necessity, read him with delight at nine years of age, and for sixty years resorted to him as a favorite author. He makes it one of the merits of Dr. John Ryland that he was familiar with "that prodigy of metaphysical acumen, the celebrated Jonathan Edwards." Dr. Chalmers, who had more sympathy with his sentiments than the authors just noticed, says:

"On the *arena* of metaphysics he stood the highest of all his cotemporaries, and that, too, at a time, when Hume was aiming his deadliest thrusts at the foundations of morality, and had thrown over the infidel cause the whole *eclat* of his reputation. The American divine affords, perhaps, the most wondrous example, in modern times of one who stood richly gifted, both in natural and spiritual discernment."¹

The effect of Edwards' speculations did not terminate in mere admiration, there were some able men whose opinions and teachings were affected by them. At the time when, to adopt the language of the younger Edwards, "The Calvinists themselves began to be ashamed of their own cause, and to give it up, so far at least as relates to liberty and neces-

1. Christian and Civic Economy, I, p. 318.

sity," there arose in England an inquiry which was known at the time as the *Modern Question*, viz.: Whether it be the duty of all men to whom the gospel is published, to repent and believe in Christ. It was extensively believed that Calvinists could not answer this question in the affirmative, there were some very able preachers among the Baptists who were not willing to answer it in the negative. We are told that Andrew Fuller, in 1776, became acquainted with Mr. Sutcliffe, of Olney, and Mr. John Ryland, Jr., of Northampton, who partly by reflection and partly by reading Edwards, Bellamy and Brainard, had begun to doubt the system of false Calvinism, or rather to be decided against it. Fuller said, however, that he found good people both among the Arminians and Hyper-Calvinists.¹

Rev. John Ryland, D.D., in his life of Fuller, says :

"Closely studying Edwards on the Will, and entering into the distinction between natural and moral inability, removed the difficulties which had once embarrassed my mind. In 1776 I borrowed of Mr. Newton, of Olney, two sermons on this subject by Mr. Smalley, which Brother Sutcliffe afterwards reprinted from the copy which I transcribed. I well remember lending them to Mr. Hall, of Arnsby, (father of the famous Robert Hall) to whom I remarked that I was ready to suspect that this distinction, well considered, would lead us to see that the affirmative side of the Modern Question was fully consistent with the strictest Calvinism."²

1. See Life of Andrew Fuller, by his Grandson.

2. Memoir of Fuller, p. 6, n.

He adds that Hall doubted, but after reading the sermons assented to his remark. Dr. Ryland says again in the same work :

“I question much if any thinking man can steer clear of false Calvinism on the one hand and real Arminianism on the other without entering into the distinction between natural and moral inability, as it is commonly termed.”¹

He here refers to Dr. Twisse and John Howe as admitting the importance of the distinction. Robert Hall supposed that Edwards derived the distinction from Owen. These theologians, Fuller and Ryland, with some of their associates, sympathized with their American friends upon some other doctrines, as original sin and imputation. After a time their position provoked discussion with some of the more strict Calvinists of their own denomination ; especially their doctrine of the atonement, the New England view of which they had adopted, was considered a dangerous innovation.

IV.

VIRTUE.

It might be said to have been the mission of New England Theology to give an ethical form to Calvinism. It was necessary, therefore, that it should teach a clear and distinct doctrine of virtue. This topic, of necessity central in any speculation concerning morals, received special attention from the fol-

1. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

lowers of Edwards. His treatise on that subject has been spoken of. His successors have discussed the matter more fully than he did, so that it has continued to be a theme of marked interest to the present time. Dr. Hopkins, the New Haven school, and the Oberlin school, have each made it prominent. But while all parties have retained certain words and phrases, and adopted the same general definition, there has been, by no means, entire agreement in their teachings.

At first thought it would be supposed that, of all subjects, virtue is the one on which there could be no difference of opinion. The good man is known and recognized everywhere. Goodness is a quality which cannot long be concealed, cannot long be successfully counterfeited. But as soon as we attempt to analyze it we see that the term itself is not easily defined and that there may be discordant opinions concerning absolute goodness. Do we mean by virtue that which is always good, an object of praise, in itself, or do we mean that which is sometimes good, useful on special occasions? Is the good man the one who occasionally does the world a service, or must he devote his life to the service of the world? A professional gambler might warn one of the danger of taking a certain road in a journey, a disciple of him who went about doing good might spend his days in warning men of the danger of a life of sin. Are they both to be considered good men in the same sense? Each has done a good thing, is each to be accounted a man of virtue? The former has no quality that restrains him from wrongs of every kind. The latter intends

to avoid all wrong-doing. A person possessed of the latter trait is virtuous in himself, virtuous as a man; others do *works* that may be praiseworthy, he is praiseworthy because of his *character*. In searching for virtue, therefore, we search for a quality that sanctifies all that it touches, or that is in itself of absolute worth. The word virtue is not in itself sufficiently definite. Edwards qualifies it again and again to assure us that he is treating of true virtue or holiness. Hopkins generally uses the word holiness in preference to the word virtue. The New England divines have with great unanimity answered the question; *what is virtue?* with this assertion, virtue consists in benevolence. Equivalent expressions are sometimes adopted, such as: love is the sum of the virtues, or love is the fulfilling of the law.

It is obvious, that this definition would not absolutely limit the thoughts of those speculating upon this theme, but that the definition might be adopted by those differing widely in their real sentiments.

Edwards' view has already been noticed. He made holiness absolute benevolence, love called forth immediately by being simply considered. But he, perhaps unconsciously, modifies this view, though he constantly recurs to it. He says that by being in general, he means intelligent being in general. This destroys the immediateness of the effect of being as such and renders the benevolence no longer absolute. He says also:

“Spiritual beauty (which he had asserted to be virtue) consists wholly in this (i. e. love of being

simply considered) and the various qualities and exercises of mind which proceed from it, and the external actions which proceed from these internal qualities and exercises.”¹

He attempts, not very successfully, to bring all these under the category of benevolence, by showing that complacency is evolved from benevolence. Whatever may be thought of his reasoning, it is clear that he supplements absolute benevolence in order to embrace all the virtues under the single term benevolence. Dr. Hopkins is the one among the New England theologians who has given the largest place to benevolence. He uses the expression absolute benevolence and claims to agree with Edwards. It might better be said, he begins where Edwards leaves off. He says:

“President Edwards, in his dissertation on the nature of true virtue, has given the same account of holiness for substance, though under a different name, which the reader will find in the following inquiry. All I can pretend to, as an improvement on him, is to have explained some things more fully than he did, and more particularly stated the opposition of holiness to self-love, and shown that this representation of holiness is agreeable to the scripture; and to have answered some objections he has not mentioned, and made a number of inferences.”²

Hopkins’ treatise on holiness is prolix, controversial and repetitious, but on the theme itself he dwelt with rapture. He was not a writer of special literary merit, but on this subject his conceptions were grand

1. Works II, p. 265.

2. III, p. 7.

and his language eloquent. His views of the topic itself will be presented here, reference to the controversial portions will be reserved for another place. He says:

“Holiness is that by which intelligent beings are united together in the highest, most perfect and beautiful union. It consists in that harmony of affection and union of heart by which the intelligent system becomes one, so far as holiness prevails, which fixes every being, by his own inclination and choice, in his proper place, so as in the best manner to promote the good of the whole. There is no moral beauty or happiness among moral beings without harmony and union of heart. All sin is opposed to this; it sets intelligences in opposition to each other, and spreads the most disagreeable and unhappy discord. But holiness unites them; it consists in the highest and most excellent kind of union in nature.”

As he makes holiness a force uniting human beings in one whole, so he makes it, as love, a vital force. The following has an Edwardean metaphysical tone:

“The new creature produced by the Spirit of God in regeneration, by which men are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, is that in which all Christian holiness consists. This is the moral image of God; the divine nature communicated or implanted; or Christ formed in the soul. And this consists in a principle of true love; and all the exercises and obedience of a Christian, through the course of a holy life, are the exertions and exercises of this love, this new creature. It is the same life and active nature by which the Christian lives, and acts in a

holy manner on all occasions,—the new creature living and acting,—as much so as the various exercises of an animal are the same life, exerting itself and acting.”¹

He made holiness the sum of the virtues, sees in it all God’s perfections combined,—his wisdom, justice, truth and faithfulness. In the same way he finds all human excellence in love or holiness. Commenting on the words, “Every one that loveth knoweth God,” he says that love is, or implies all that light and discerning in which true wisdom consists, therefore love is wisdom. In the same way he argues that love is justice, fidelity, truthfulness. He seems to consider it as the primal moral substance in which all the excellences of rational and responsible beings consist.

Hopkins carefully distinguishes the benevolence on which he sets so high an estimate from all counterfeits. It must be free from any taint of selfishness. It must be disinterested. This qualifying term has become famous. For two generations or more, wherever his theology was known, disinterested benevolence was a theme of ardent discussion with both laity and clergy. Hopkins considered that the improvement of most importance which he made in carrying out Edwards’ ideas, was in putting self-love in its proper place over against the love of being in general. He sets aside as not pertaining to the subject, that which is sometimes called self-love, the instinctive interest which one takes spontaneously in the affairs of the world; this feeling he looks upon

1. I, p. 446.

as merely the means of communion between man and the world. He justifies as not reprehensible but virtuous the love one bears himself as a part of being in general, one is under obligation to love himself as much as, and no more than, he loves any other equal fragment of the universe. But he points out with great fulness the evil of that self-love,—the only real self-love,—which prompts one to foster his own interest separately from the general interest, to set his own pleasure above the pleasure of the common mass. Our own interests as individuals must be set aside. We must favor ourselves as we would our neighbors, as a part of the whole and for the sake of the whole. The good man is willing to give up his friend for the advancement of the common interest, to encourage him in entering on the life of a soldier or a missionary in heathen lands, if his duty seems so to require, and what one should be ready to allow a friend to do he must be ready himself to do in like circumstances. Love must be disinterested. One must be willing to suffer, to give up life, to be condemned to eternal woe, if the good of the universe demands it, if the glory of God demands it.

The view of holiness which we have thus far noticed, all-embracing and disinterested benevolence, is inspiring, but Hopkins found it necessary to concentrate his thoughts in the application of the subject and recede somewhat from the broad generalizations in which he expressed his theory. We have seen that Edwards, after making virtue love of being in general, reduced the range of love to intelligent

being. Hopkins still more distinctly deals with intelligent being. And then he requires an appreciation of the worth of particular beings. While he makes love of universal being distinctive of holy love, so that love of individuals otherwise than through the whole, and as parts of the whole, would be sinful, yet he teaches that each thing must be loved according to its worth. God must be loved supremely, his happiness, his glory, made the chief object of pursuit, while angels and men are to be objects of our good will, according to their substantial value. God is indeed the sum and substance of all existence, so that we cannot fix any proportion between our love of him and our love of men, yet men, as possessed of being, are to be loved, and loved in proportion to the amount of being of which they are possessed, the great and good more than the weak and vile. Hopkins finds himself compelled to make still further modifications of his love of being in general, in order to make his scheme a practical one. He knows that a man must take care of his own, specially those of his own household. Accordingly he lays down these principles:

“This disinterested benevolence regards the interest and happiness of those who are nearest, and most in sight, more strongly and tenderly than those who are farther off, and more out of sight.”¹

Of the good man he says:

“His benevolence will be more particularly, and in a stronger degree, exercised towards those who

1. I, p. 335.

are most in his view, * * * and those who are more especially under his care, and to whom he is under advantage, and has more opportunity to do good.”¹

Again he modifies the application of benevolence in this way :

“This love, in which a man regards himself as part of the whole, and his interest and happiness for the same reason he regards that of his neighbor, may be exercised with greater strength and more sensibly with respect to his own interest and welfare than towards that of his neighbor, who is as worthy of regard as himself, and that for these two reasons: he has a more clear, full and constant view of himself and his interest than he can have for his neighbor’s, * * * and every person has a more particular and immediate care of himself committed to him by God than of his neighbor.”²

Hopkins’ treatise upon holiness is philosophical rather than scriptural, yet he had the utmost confidence that his views were in harmony with the teachings of the Bible. His argument on this point is brief and clear. He assumes that, “the law of God is the standard of all moral rectitude and holiness.” This is his starting point, a principle not to be questioned. He proceeds :

“Our divine Teacher has, in his great wisdom and goodness, given us a summary of the divine law in the following words: ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.’ This is the first and great com-

1. I, p. 377.

2. III, p. 24.

mandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets: Here all obedience to the law is reduced to one thing, —love. This is the whole that is required; therefore, this is the whole of true holiness; it consists in this love and in nothing else.”¹

It would be easy to criticise Hopkins’ arguments concerning holiness, but two or three suggestions are all that is required in a historical treatise. This scriptural argument is quite too summary and assuming. The words of our Lord are not to be treated as if they were used with scientific accuracy. They should be accepted with the meaning that his hearers would naturally attribute to them. He said, (Luke 14:26:

“If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.”

Hatred is here made as prominent as love in the previous passage. Neither text can be made the basis of a theory of morals. Again if the law is the standard of righteousness, love is virtuous because it is obedience, not because it is love. Yet again, his subtle discriminations which justify a man in caring for himself rather than his neighbor show that virtue is not in simple, absolute benevolence, but in regulated, adjusted benevolence. Once more, he finds himself perplexed with those virtuous emotions

1. III, p. 13.

that fall under complacency. He follows Edwards in trying to show that complacency is involved in benevolence, but, though evidently not satisfied with Edwards' reasoning, he reaches no more satisfactory conclusion himself.

The benevolence theory of virtue is allied to the utilitarian theory. Some consider them really identical. The late Professor White of the Union Theological Seminary in New York, taught that Edwards' theory involved the New Haven happiness-theory. Being as such is not readily made an object of disinterested affection. Hegel considered simple being equivalent to nothing. Whatever we may think of being in general, actual attachment by love or admiration or any other emotion must take place through some quality in the being which renders it attractive. And simple benevolence must be about as empty as simple being. Benevolence that is aimless seems hardly worthy of the name. A bare well-wishing without an object to be benefited or a good to be bestowed is, at best, a feeble expression of human sentiment. Neither Edwards nor Hopkins could rest in so attenuated a theory. They did not propose to throw away their good-will, but would have it directed to intelligent being, to that capable of appreciating it and responding to it. Hence the discriminations as to the demands upon our benevolence which have been referred to. Nearness to ourselves and advantage to confer benefit are to be regarded; one's family and his own person are committed to his keeping and must be more an object of solicitude and affection than things distant and

unknown. As soon as these discriminations are applied, we ask after the condition and need of the object to which our benevolence is directed. Let the object be a sentient non-rational creature, our duty is to contribute to the creature's comfort and contentment, perhaps its happiness. Let the object be a rational, moral being, benevolence requires us to promote the being's good, both physical and spiritual. The term which is used to express well-being, the state valued and longed for, is happiness. We are not to limit the term to physical enjoyments, as is too often done, but should extend it to all that increases the value of man's estate for body or soul, for time or eternity. True benevolence is wishing to sentient being the highest happiness it is capable of receiving, and includes the effort to confer on those under our care, or within our reach, the special good which they most need. It is natural then to define benevolence as the desire to promote happiness; happiness being adopted as the term embracing whatever is good,—good for sentient being.

But this is utilitarianism, and if we make utility the governing principle then we have the utilitarian scheme of virtue. This is a simple scheme and is widely accepted. Happiness it is said is the ultimate good; and the only thing good in itself; whatever else is good, is good for the simple reason that it promotes happiness. Virtue is good simply because it promotes happiness; benevolence is virtue because it is our way, our only way, of promoting happiness. But there are many kinds and degrees of happiness; is there virtue in promoting them, one and all? The

happiness of a sensual life interferes with the happiness of an elevated moral life; interferes with the blessedness of the eternal life. How are we to adjust our efforts in promoting happiness? The reply is, we must not sacrifice the less to the greater. In other words true benevolence requires us to promote the highest happiness, making other kinds of it subordinate. It is to be noticed also that the happiness of one often interferes with that of another; whose happiness shall be secured? whose sacrificed? The reply is, we must seek the good of the whole. Each one must forego personal gratifications so far as is necessary for the general welfare. And each will find his highest happiness in denying self for the good of all. Dr. N. W. Taylor, a strong advocate of the happiness theory of morals says :

“From the very constitution of his nature, the perfection of man in character, as well as happiness, will forever be in promoting the happiness of others.”¹

It may be said we cannot continually look to the highest happiness of the universe; cannot judge of and aim at a general good in all the common occupations of life, but it may be replied that we can have as a ruling purpose the promotion of the general good—the present and eternal interests, both of ourselves and others. We can make practical the life of virtue as set forth in a definition attributed to Dr. Taylor: “Virtue is making the highest happiness of the universe the ultimate object of pursuit.” We may labor for the specific advantage of others or

1. Christian Spectator. 1830, p. 161.

for the furtherance of our own interest in the belief that we thus serve our race and our God. And we may believe that we promote the good of humanity in general as we promote our own, by an increase of happiness.

This scheme of utility has been accepted by many prominent thinkers, and may be said to be one phase of New England theology. Dr. Dwight says:

“Virtue is founded in utility. * * * Good is of two kinds only, happiness and the cause of happiness, or the means of happiness.” Virtue is a good because it comes under the last head. “The excellence of virtue, therefore, consists wholly in this: that it is the cause of good, that is, of happiness, the ultimate good; the only thing for which virtue is valuable.”¹

Dr. Asa Burton and the younger Edwards adopted this view of virtue. Whether the entire Edwardean scheme as developed by Hopkins, Smalley, Bellamy and others, may be rigidly proved to be identical with this utilitarian scheme, is a question which has not yet been fully answered. There are some who by no means grant it. President Edwards denies that we apprehend virtue simply through its consequences. He says:

“Therefore, if this be all that is meant by them who affirm that virtue is founded in sentiment, and not in reason, that they who see the beauty there is in true virtue, do not perceive it by argumentation or its connections and consequences, but by the frame of their own minds, or a certain spiritual sense given

1. Dwight's Theology, Sermon, 99.

them of God, whereby they immediately perceive pleasure in the presence of the idea of true virtue in their minds, or are directly gratified in the view or contemplation of this object, this is certainly true.”¹

Some would deny that benevolence—wishing happiness to a sentient being—could be contemplated without regard to consequences. Edwards is claimed, therefore, by both parties, the utilitarians and their opponents.

The utilitarian scheme has been vigorously antagonized at Andover. It has been there claimed that ‘When Edwards said that virtue consisted in benevolence, he meant that benevolence was that which contained virtue, and that was all he meant.’ This expression compared with that cited from President Dwight, of New Haven, brings out clearly the contrast on this point between the two schools. At New Haven it was held, that benevolence is virtue because it is the means of promoting happiness;—the only means by which a responsible being can of purpose promote the happiness of the universe. At Andover it was held that there is an element in benevolence which we call virtue or righteousness. We recognize it by intuition. Every man sees that benevolence has the quality of righteousness. An adherent of the former school said that its theologians were not sharp-eyed enough to see this quality wrapped up in benevolence. They could only see that benevolence promoted happiness and was therefore virtuous. The benevolence here in view is true benevolence;—the choice of the highest happiness of the universe as an ultimate object

1. II, p. 301.

of pursuit. Both schools accept this as virtue and true benevolence. The Andover view is that there are two divisions of virtue, the love of benevolence and the love of complacency; the former is good will towards being as capable of happiness, or holiness, or both, the latter love of beings as actually holy. The virtue in complacency is of higher dignity than that in benevolence, but the love of benevolence is the root of all virtues other than itself. This Andover view has been designated as rightarian, though the term is not adopted into philosophical language. It makes right an object of direct intuition, makes doing right virtue, finds all virtue in love, and the love of benevolence at least the condition of all virtue. The Oberlin theologians have pressed benevolence into their service more largely than their predecessors in New England. They affiliate with the New Haven rather than the Andover view. President Finney rejects what he calls the rightarian scheme and applies to it the epithets *cold, loveless, repulsive*, etc. He exhibits a decided aversion to it because of its moral tendencies. President Fairchild, who, as well as President Finney, has published a system of theology, has given the simplest and clearest statement of this doctrine. He makes benevolence the sum of virtue, not that which contains virtue as an element or a quality. He does not, however, make benevolence a good because of its utility, but because of what it is in itself. Still he seems to make benevolence identical with the design to be useful or helpful. He makes it a disposition of the soul. The benevolent disposition is righteousness or holiness. This is with him

an absolute principle. If one were not in a position to do any good work, or saw no good to be done, if only he had the disposition to help when occasion should arise, he would be a holy man. He says:

“Benevolence is the only eternal, unchangeable, universal principle of action, ‘Benevolence, or regard for well-being, which is a state of will, a voluntary choice, is always right, irrespective of any conditions. No supposition can make it wrong. It is right in the absolute sense; known to be right from its own nature.”¹

The extreme application of the duty of disinterested benevolence is to be found in a posthumous work of Dr. Hopkins. It equals anything of Carlyle or Mill in boldly facing the divine judgment. He wrote a treatise on entire submission to the will of God in the form of a dialogue between a Calvinist and a Semi-Calvinist, that is, between a Hopkinsian and a Moderate Calvinist. He teaches that every person should be willing to be damned for the glory of God. The dialogue was not published till two years after his death, and there is no evidence that he ever gave special prominence to the most striking expressions contained in it, yet he could not have written the dialogue had he not believed that these expressions set forth important truths. This work called forth much opposition on the one hand, and on the other many explanations intended to render its teachings less offensive. In Whelpley’s Triangle it is denied again and again that Hopkinsians teach that one must be willing to be dammed, but the dialogue is too ex-

1. Theology, pp. 114, 115.

plicit to permit extending the denial to Hopkins himself. Indeed his view of holiness leads logically to the doctrine here maintained.

Again, it has been maintained that the doctrine is not peculiar to Hopkins, but it may be doubted whether any others, not his theological pupils, have entertained precisely his views. Multitudes of New England preachers have taught entire submission to the government of God, but they had in mind an acceptance of God's judgment as to actual character and moral desert, not a supralapsarian doom to sin and hell. Hopkins had no reference to desert but taught absolute disinterestedness. Some early New England divines, as Hooker and Shepard, inculcated a willing acceptance of divine condemnation, but would have it accepted because it was deserved and because this acceptance would lead to reconciliation with God and the salvation of the soul. Hopkins taught that one should not only be willing to be damned if he deserved it, but should also be willing to deserve it, if the glory of God so required. He taught that the glory of God demands the eternal condemnation of some sinners, else none would be condemned. No one knows that he is not the person to whom such a doom is appointed, and to whomever it is appointed, he should accept it cheerfully as his way of glorifying God. Any person should be willing that his friend should be damned, his neighbor or himself, if it is for the highest good. Nothing short of such willingness is true devotion to God or the exercise of the true Christian spirit. No one can maintain his Christian standing except by

such a devotion of self. If it had been proclaimed to the angels before any of them fell, that some must, for the glory of God, fall away and become objects of wrath, each one should have said, "Here am I, let God glorify himself in me." Those who maintained their integrity did it by being thus willing to fall; those who apostatized did it by being unwilling to enter on a life of sin and misery. At all times, through all the realms of moral beings, the true children of God maintain their position only by their readiness to renounce it and accept the opposite when the glory of God requires it. In all the universe every being and every event has its place as the greatest good of the whole demands, and every person is required to acquiesce in the ordering of the affairs of the world. Every angel should be ready to change place with any devil, every saint with any sinner, if God's glory requires it, and only by steadily maintaining this attitude of mind can any moral being continue in a holy life. In the dialogue Calvinist says :

"The doctrine which I have endeavored to explain and vindicate tends to the advantage of Christians many ways. * * * It is suited to enlarge the mind of the Christian, and to extend his ideas and thoughts to objects which are great and immense, and wake up the feelings and exercises of disinterested benevolence, of supreme love to God and regard to the general good. * * * This will prepare him to acquiesce in the eternal destruction of those who perish, and even to rejoice in it, as necessary for the glory of God, and the greatest good of the whole, in the exercise of that disinterested benevolence

which makes him to be willing to be one of that sinful, wretched number, were this necessary to answer these ends.”¹

V.

JUSTIFICATION.

This doctrine, as is well known, has been considered, since the Reformation, one of utmost importance. Dr. John Owen believed that a failure to maintain it in its integrity would lead either to Popery or Atheism, or something akin to one of these. The particular form it would take in any scheme of theology might be inferred, with a good degree of certainty, from the doctrine of atonement adopted, but we may notice it briefly, by itself, as held in New England.

The strictly Calvinistic doctrine maintains that justification is pronouncing just the person who believes in Christ. God as judge acquits the sinner as guiltless before the law. The procedure is forensic; the acquittal judicial. The character of the person acquitted is not affected by the process, but simply his relation to the law; he was accused of transgression, but the accusation is denied to be valid. The ground of justification is the sacrifice of Christ. He by his sufferings and death,—his passive obedience, atoned for the sins of men; by his active obedience he earned the reward promised to those who keep the law. Inasmuch as his obedient life

1. III, p. 156,

and sacrificial death are of infinite inherent merit they are sufficient to procure the salvation of all who can avail themselves of that merit. If by any means men can be made one with Christ, so that he and they become in a just and proper sense one person, they may receive the benefit of his atoning work. There is no objection, under such conditions, to imputing to them both his passive and active obedience. Such a union between Christ and men is effected by faith, therefore those who believe are justified, pronounced just, at the divine tribunal. Faith in this relation is not a meritorious work, but may be compared to the atmosphere which puts the hearing ear in communication with a vibrating body, it brings Christ and men into communion. The union is so complete and vital that the believer is the actual possessor of what his Redeemer has acquired, so that his debt of sin is paid rather than remitted; he is acquitted rather than pardoned.

This is one of the most distinctly defined doctrines of the Christian creed, and in setting forth the great truth, that salvation is not by works, is the basis of Protestantism, but it may be questioned whether its bold positions are not too rigidly theoretical, and whether experience may not properly modify some of its statements. The idea of pardon, for instance, is too intimately associated with the scriptures and with Christian sentiment, to be dropped from our theology. Indeed very few have so held to the believer's claim to Christ's merit as not to associate the forgiveness of sin immediately with the application of his merit. Dr. Woods, says:

“Now, what is forgiveness but a remission of the penalty, or a removal of the evils involved in the penalty? * * * And here we shall see at once, that justification implies complete forgiveness. So it is represented in Romans 6. * * * * Believers are justified not by their own works, but on the ground of what Christ has done for them.”¹

Again there are those who think that the divine attributes do not, each, separately and independently affect the divine will. It is believed that justice does not always lead to the result that would be reached if there were no such attribute as benevolence, and that benevolence is not always exercised without regard to justice. But the strict Calvinistic doctrine of justification, which makes it simply a judicial act, maintains that distributive justice is literally satisfied by the atonement of Christ. Prof. A. A. Hodge says :

“Christ did in strict rigor of justice satisfy vicariously for us the demands of the law, both the obedience demanded and the penalty denounced. His satisfaction is the ground of our justification.”²

A gradual modification of views concerning this doctrine may be observed if we recall the positions taken by some of the leading New England theologians. Edwards preached on this subject—justification—in the course of the revival in his parish in 1734–35. The sermons were prepared for the purpose of refuting the errors of the day, and were published. They excited serious opposition before

1. Works, III, pp. 167, 168.

2. Outlines of Theology, p. 507.

their publication, and must have been intended as a careful statement of his view.¹ He maintains the doctrine in its strictest and fullest form.

“A person is said to be justified, when he is approved of God as free from the guilt of sin and its deserved punishment; and as having that righteousness belonging to him that entitles to the reward of life.”²

The doctrine of imputation he states thus:

“Christ’s perfect obedience shall be reckoned to our account, so that we shall have the benefit of it, as though we had performed it ourselves, and so we suppose that a title to eternal life is given us as the reward of this righteousness.”³

... “It is absolutely necessary, that in order to a sinner’s being justified, the righteousness of some other should be reckoned to his account; for it is declared that the person justified is looked upon as (in himself) ungodly; but God neither will nor can justify a person without a righteousness; for justification is manifestly a forensic term, as the word is used in Scripture, and the thing a judicial thing, or the act of a judge.”⁴

The ground of imputation is union with Christ.

“This matter may be better understood if we consider that Christ and the whole church of saints are, as it were, one body, of which he is the Head, and they are members, of different place and capacity; now the whole body, head and members, have communion in Christ’s righteousness; they are all partakers of the benefit of it.”⁵

1. Dwight’s *Life of Edwards*, pp. 122, 434.

2. *Works*, IV, p. 66. 3. *Ibid.*, p. 91. 4. *Ibid.*, p. 93. 5. *Ibid.*, p. 116.

Before the preparation of this sermon Edwards had still more pointedly attributed our justification to the satisfaction of distributive justice.

“Salvation is an absolute debt to the believer from God, so that he may in justice demand and challenge it, not upon the account of what he himself has done, but upon the account of what his Surety has done.”¹

Notwithstanding these very positive affirmations of the traditional doctrine of justification there are many things in Edwards’ writings which would suggest to his followers modification of that doctrine. He gave great prominence to the sovereignty of God, and sovereignty is associated with the idea of pardon rather than that of legal acquittal. Indeed sovereignty and pardon tend to displace and exclude the idea of a judge and a decision based on law and evidence. Some authors have adopted the expression *Sovereign Judge*, apparently for the purpose of retaining both ideas. Moreover the meaning of the word sovereign is too narrow to express Edwards’ idea of the divine operations. He looked upon all events as subsisting through the prevalence of the Infinite Will. Though he always held to the responsibility of, and the guilt of, transgressors of the law, he often expressed himself as looking upon all things, including atonement and justification, as the result of a divine evolution. He says :

“As there is an infinite fulness of all possible good in God, a fulness of every perfection, of all excellency

1. Park’s Collection of Essays on the Atonement, p. 14,

and beauty, and of infinite happiness, and as this fulness is capable of communication or emanation *ad extra*; so it seems a thing amiable and valuable in itself that it should be communicated or flow forth, that this infinite fountain of good should send forth abundant streams, that this infinite fountain of light should, diffusing its excellent fulness, pour forth light all around,—and as this is excellent, so a disposition to this, in the Divine Being, must be looked upon as a perfection or an excellent disposition. Such an emanation of good is, in some sense a multiplication of it; so far as the communication or external stream may be looked upon as anything besides the fountain, so far it may be looked on as an increase of good.”¹

Sometimes it seems difficult to make the creature, according to Edwards’ view, subject to any law but the law of development.

Again, the position which he gave to benevolence is well understood. He made it the foundation of virtue. Although he was too reverential in his sentiments to discuss the nature of virtue in the Deity, he constantly affirms God’s infinite love of himself, which would be love of being. When this conception of the divine character is entertained, it is very easy to look upon the divine benevolence as the best and most easily applied principle of judgment to which we can resort in our estimate of the moral world. We may hold that God is constantly seeking the highest good of the universe, and that if at any time, by any possibility, benevolence and distributive justice should fail to coincide, the latter must give place to the former, and that the demands

1. *Ibid.*, II, p. 206.

of public justice simply, as the younger Edwards taught, are to be regarded. This would open the way to a remission of the penalty of sin without a literal legal acquittal.

Edwards uses some expressions which may lead to a modification of the assertion that the ungodly are justified, or that the subjective character of the justified one has nothing to do with his acquittal. He ascribes a certain power to faith as an act of the believer,—the act that renders him, not deserving, but fit, to be justified.

“There is this benefit purchased, which God sees it to be a more meet and suitable thing that it should be assigned to some than others, because he sees them differently qualified, that qualification wherein the meetness of this benefit, as the case stands, consists in that in us by which we are justified.”¹

That is, it consists in our faith.

“God sees it fit, that in order to a union being established between two intelligent, active beings or persons, so as that they should be looked upon as one, there should be the mutual act of both, that each should receive the other, as actively joining themselves one to another. God in requiring this in order to a union with Christ as one of his people, treats men as reasonable creatures, capable of act and choice; and hence sees fit that they only that are one with Christ by their own act, should be looked upon as one in law.”²

The conception of the author here may not have been that faith as a personal act precedes justifica-

1. *Ibid.*, IV, p. 68.

2. *Ibid.*, IV, p. 71.

tion, but it would require no great straining of the passage to make it teach that only those first regenerate are justified.

Dr. Bellamy has not left any formal discussion of justification, but his statements concerning it are clear. He refers to Edwards' sermon as a full and accurate treatment of the topic. He very distinctly bases our justification on union with Christ:

"We can be justified by faith, therefore, no otherwise than, as faith is that, on our part, whereby we are united to Christ, and so become interested in him, in whom alone God is well pleased; whose righteousness and atonement alone are sufficient to satisfy for our guilt, and qualify us for the divine favor and eternal life. Even as a woman is interested in her husband's estate by marriage, not as it is an act of virtue in her to marry him, but as hereby she is united to him, and becomes one with him."¹

His views seem to savor of the old theology in that he distinguishes between Christ's righteousness and his atoning work, makes justification include both remission of guilt and a title to eternal life, characterizes Christ's obedience as of infinite moral excellence,² and, unlike Edwards, finds in faith no qualification for God's regard.

"We are justified without respect to anything in us, or about us, considered as a recommending qualification, simply by free grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. Our union with Christ is the foundation of our interest in him, his atonement

1. *Ibid.*, II, p. 410.

2. *Ibid.*, I, p. 366.

and merits; and so of our title to pardon, justification and eternal life, according to the gospel.”¹

Dr. Hopkins, presents his view of justification in the language of the old theology, but his thoughts have the tinge of the new. He says:

“Therefore in the gospel, sinners are represented as being saved (i. e. brought into a state of pardon and acceptance with God, and to a title to eternal life) by the blood of Christ; or by his merit and worthiness being imputed to them or reckoned to their account. Accordingly, it is by virtue of their union to him, or being in him, that they are delivered from condemnation, justified, etc.”²

Here we have recognized, union with Christ, merit of Christ, imputation, and justification as consisting of two things, viz. pardon and a title to eternal life. Of these two elements of justification, he says, they are never separated, “but are both always implied in the justification of a sinner.”³

In regard to the faith on which justification depends, he says:

It implies *love*, otherwise “it would not in any manner or degree unite the sinner to Christ so as to render it fit and proper that his righteousness should be reckoned in his favor, or be any reason why such a believer should be justified, rather than another who does not believe.”⁴

With Edwards, he sees a fitness in the justification of the believer, but is careful to add, it is not

1. Ibid., III, p. 79. 2. III, p. 245. 3. Ibid., I, p. 458. 4. Ibid., I., 472.

a moral, only a natural fitness.¹ For the want of this fitness only a part of mankind are united to Christ.²

While Hopkins insists very strenuously on our union with Christ, he is careful to assert that we do not personally come into possession of Christ's moral character.

"The redeemed, when perfectly holy in heaven, will, considered in and by themselves, be as deserving of the divine displeasure and everlasting punishment as they ever were, and will be so forever. They continue in a justified state, and in the enjoyment of the favor of God, by continuing united to Christ; and were it possible that this union between the Redeemer and them should cease, they would, they must fall under condemnation, and sink into hell." Hence their justification is really conditioned on their perseverance.³

Late in his life Dr. Hopkins wrote a sermon in which he replies to the objection that the doctrine of salvation by faith, opens the way to a godless and immoral life. He says:

"According to the law of faith, true holiness is as necessary in order to justification as if the sinner were justified by the merit of his works, though in a different way, and for a different reason. * * * This faith itself is a holy exercise, as has been proved; and men cannot live by faith but by living a holy life."⁴

Dr. Smalley seems to have held to a modified view of justification and to have interpreted the old

1. *Ibid.*, I, p. 472.

2. *Ibid.*, I, p. 465.

3. *Ibid.*, I., pp. 475, 477.

4. *Ibid.*, III., p. 682.

by the new more fully than any of his predecessors. He believed, that a legal justification on the ground that Christ literally satisfied the law, leads inevitably to the doctrine of universal salvation.

“The argument stands thus. God is obliged in justice to save men as far as the merit of Christ extends; but the merit of Christ is sufficient for the salvation of all men; therefore God is obliged in justice to save all.”¹

He made, therefore, a fitness of things under the divine government rather than an obligation under which the Diety was placed, the basis of justification.¹ He considered the aim of the atonement to be the removal of obstacles to the salvation of men rather than placing God under the necessity of making compensation for value received.² Accordingly he denied that Christ had any merit of condignity, his merit was only that of congruity. Having become man he was under law and his obedience secured his own good estate alone, he had not earned any thing in this way to be placed to the credit of men.³

Yet he held to a strict scheme of justification, one involving a claim to eternal rewards as well as the pardon of sin, one based on union with Christ, and one consistent with the law and government of God maintained in their strictest integrity.

“But it was not enough that we should be redeemed from death. In order to our being heirs of God, and having an interest in the covenant of grace,

1. Park's Collection of Essays on the Atonement, p. 58.

2. Ibid., p. 76.

3. Ibid., p. 54.

4. Ibid., p. 55.

it was necessary that the law as a covenant of works should be fulfilled; and so the forfeited inheritance of eternal life be redeemed. This our Saviour did by his active obedience. * * * These two things are implied in the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. The merit of his obedience, and the manifestation of the inflexibility of divine vindictive justice, made by his sufferings and death. And these two things were necessary in order to our being justified, and yet the spirit of the law be maintained, and God be just."¹

The means by which the law was maintained were the sufferings of Christ. When he undertook to answer for the offenses of men, "Judgment was laid to the line, and righteousness to the plummet" in as rigorous and unrelenting a manner as if he had actually been the most odious criminal in all the universe."² Smalley guards carefully against the idea that God can pardon, otherwise than as a judge administering the law. "By the death of Christ, we have the strongest possible proof that no sovereign pardons—no pardons without a sacrifice to satisfy the law, are ever to be expected from God."³

He makes gospel justification in effect the same as legal justification, a result of union with Christ effected by faith.⁴

Dr. Emmons' view of justification is simple and may be easily presented. It is the goal of the New England tendency. He considered it the equivalent of forgiveness and that it does not include a title to the rewards of heaven. He held that it was granted for Christ's sake, because of the atonement he had

1. Parks Collection, p. 50.

2. Ibid., p. 72.

3. Sermons, Middletown, 1814, p. 144.

4. Ibid., p. 141.

made, and that it is the only thing which God bestows for Christ's sake. When one is regenerated he may pray to God for pardon, but regeneration is not an object of prayer. God bestows that as a sovereign. When one's sins are forgiven he may live the life of godliness, and by his good works secure a reward, win the blessed life of heaven, but this is never granted for anything that Christ has done. Only his suffering, not his obedience, wrought out the atonement.

“They (Antinomians) suppose that believers are under no obligation to perform good works, because Christ has both suffered and obeyed in their room and stead, so that their justification and salvation do not in the least depend upon anything they can do, either before or after they are justified. They hold that neither good works nor bad works can promote or prevent the salvation of believers. They build this false and dangerous opinion upon what the Scripture says concerning justification by faith alone, without the deeds of the law. They suppose that justification implies not only forgiveness, but a title to eternal life ; and that there is no difference between God's forgiving and rewarding believers. This is a great mistake ; for though God forgives believers solely on account of the atonement of Christ, yet he does not reward them for his obedience, but for their own.”¹

Dr. Griffin's view of justification may be readily inferred from his theory of the atonement, which will be noticed hereafter. His idea of the higher ransom, consisting of the merit of Christ's obedience in addition to the atonement by his blood, would

1. Works, V, p. 77.

require that justification should include a title to the rewards of heaven. But he strongly opposes a legal justification. He says of the Old School doctrine that it is commercial and involves two errors :

“The first is, that it makes the union which really subsists between Christ and believers to lie between Christ and the elect. The second is, that it supposes a legal oneness, a legal imputation, a legal obligation to suffer, a legal punishment, a legal satisfaction, and a legal claim on the part of the redeemed.”¹

He is ready to adopt all these expressions if a word like moral or practical is substituted for legal. He considers that the advocates of legality press “the figurative language of Scripture into a literal meaning.”

“No proposition can be more contradictory than that the justification of a transgressor is a legal transaction, or that a sinner is literally righteous, or that a man is justly entitled to pardon.”²

Dr. N. W. Taylor treated elaborately of justification. Much of his attention was turned to the meaning of the word and to a refutation of the Roman Catholic view, but his own view is also clearly stated, and is of a strongly New England type. He gives special prominence to the idea of general justice, and in that way separates the subject wholly from mystical union, imputation and distributive justice. He gives this studied definition :

1. Park's Collection, p. 222.

2. Ibid., p. 240.

“Justification as an act of God in the relation of Law-giver and Judge of men is authoritative—making, or causing, or determining a disobedient subject of his law to stand relatively right in respect to its sanctions; not according to the principles of distributive justice, but according to the principles of general justice and of general benevolence.”¹

Here the Judge has authority, is not controlled by the letter of the law; he makes the subject right relatively, for practical purposes; in respect to sanctions, not commands; on the ground of general, not distributive justice. The bold way in which he sweeps aside distributive justice is indicated by the following:

“There is no act of God as a judge under the revealed system of grace, directly determining the relation of men to the sanctions of law, according to the principles of mere law. It is the doctrine of Paul, that the whole world will be judged according to the Gospel.”²

... “Distributive justice as we have before shown, is not an *essential* attribute of a perfect moral ruler and judge *in all cases*; but *only* under a system of *mere law*. Or thus, while it is necessary that such a Ruler should treat his subjects according to the principles of distributive justice in all cases under a system of mere law, it is not necessary that he should so treat them under a system of law and grace combined in one by a complete atonement. Justice as an essential attribute in such a Ruler, *in all cases* is *general justice*, or an immutable disposition or purpose prompted by benevolence, to uphold the authority of law as indispensable to the general good. This is the only attribute which, under the

1. Revealed Theology, p. 341.

2. Ibid., p. 357.

name of *justice*, is essentially involved in the perfect character of a perfect Ruler and Judge." ¹

President Fairchild says :

"The sinner having turned from sin, God forgives him ; this is justification. Justification is the pardon of sin that is past. The conditions of justification are of two kinds, governmental and subjective ;—governmental, the atonement, which makes pardon safe ; personal, repentance, turning from sin to righteousness. As repentance is the condition of justification, so continued repentance, or penitence, or continued obedience is a condition of continued justification." ²

A view essentially the same was entertained by his predecessor in the presidency at Oberlin, which we give a little more in detail.

President Finney says, in controverting the doctrine of Chalmers and others :

"Justification is not forensic or judicial, a judge never pardons. It consists in the sinner's being ultimately governmentally treated as if he were just ; it consists in a governmental decree of pardon or amnesty. It is the act of either the law-making or executive department of the government. The conditions of justification are, (1) the vicarious sufferings or atonement of Christ,—this is the condition, not the ground of justification ; Christ's obedience was due to the law and was not vicarious, his suffering was vicarious and not due ; (2) repentance ; (3) faith, but a condition only as it secures sanctification ; (4) present sanctification, that is full consecration, is

1. Ibid., p, 370.

2. Theology pp, 276,277.

a condition, not ground of justification. The penitent soul remains justified no longer than this full consecration continues.”¹

Perseverance is also necessary to ultimate justification. Finney says of the ultimate ground of justification :

“It is not (1) Christ’s paying the penalty of the law; is not (2) our works of obedience; is not (3) Christ’s atonement or mediatorial work; is not (4) the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion and sanctification; but (5) the disinterested and infinite love of God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is the true and only foundation of the justification and salvation of sinners.”²

Professor Wright says that Finney, deploring the low standard of piety among professing Christians, “attributed it largely to the fact that the prevailing doctrine of justification was erroneous in its conception and Antinomian in its tendency.”³

Dr. Bushnell’s theory of justification, like his theory of the atonement, is very similar in form to that of strict Calvinism. Yet he really holds the legal satisfaction theory in abhorrence. He maintains that we are justified by the imputation to us of God’s righteousness, but he gives his own interpretation to these theological terms. To justify is, with him, to make righteous, not declare righteous; yet it is not to make righteous the personal character, or to sanctify,—the error of the Roman Catholics,—but to make righteous by an overwhelming and over-

1. and 2. *Theology*, English edition, pp. 546–564.

3. *Life of Finney*, p. 247.

powering demonstration of the divine character through Jesus Christ. The impression, by means of the incarnation, on the minds of men of the divine righteousness, seems to have been his idea of imputation: This view hardly comes within the range of New England theology, but having been presented as a refutation of it, may be briefly noticed. The author's language will best express his thoughts. He argues at length the position that the Scriptural word translated justify never refers to forensic justification, and adopts the conclusion that,

“In Christian justification there is no reference of thought whatever to the satisfaction of God's retributive justice, or to any acquittal passed on guilty men, because the score of their account with God's justice has been made even by the sufferings of Christ.”¹

He thus characterizes a righteousness procured by the penal sufferings of Christ:

“A righteousness that is in fact mere suffering, and as far as the mode of the fact is concerned, has nothing to do with righteousness at all, but only with providing a way for unrighteousness. A theologic invention more dreadful than this, it is difficult to conceive.”²

With him, “The true Christian justification is that which makes righteous.”³ The obscure point in this scheme is the righteousness of God made man's by a process neither sanctifying nor forensic. His exposition of the matter is this:

1. Vicarious Sacrifice, I, p. 415.
2. Ibid., II, p. 186.
3. Ibid., II, p. 190.

“Here then is the grand renewing office and aim of the gospel of Christ. He comes to men groping in a state of separation from God, consciously not even with their own standards of good, and, what is more, consciously not able to be—self-condemned when they are trying most to justify themselves, and despairing even the more, the more they endeavor to make themselves righteous by their own works—to such Christ comes forth, out of the righteousness of God, and also in the righteousness of God, that he may be the righteousness of God upon all them that believe, and are so brought close enough to him in their faith, to receive his inspirations. And this is the state of justification, not because some debt is made even by the penal suffering of Christ, but because that normal connection of God is restored by his sacrifice, which permits the righteousness of God to renew its everlasting flow.”¹

We have the following explanation of imputed righteousness:

“The experimental, never-to-be antiquated, scripture truth of imputed righteousness, on the other hand, is this: That the soul, when it is gained to faith, is brought back, according to the degree of faith, into its original normal relation to God; to be invested in God’s light, feeling, character—in one word, righteousness—and live derivatively from him. It is not made righteous, in the sense of being set in a state of self-centered righteousness, to be maintained by an ability complete in the person, but it is made righteous in the sense of being always to be made righteous; just as the day is made luminous, not by the light of sunrise staying in it, or held fast by it, but by the ceaseless outflow of the solar effulgence. Considered in this view, the sinning man justified is

1. *Ibid.*, I, p. 432; II. p. 203.

never thought of as being, or to be, just in himself; but he is to be counted so, be so by imputation, because his faith holds him to a relation to God, where the sun of his righteousness will be forever gilding him with its fresh radiations.”¹

1. Ibid., II, p. 214.

CHAPTER IV.

HOPKINSIAN PECULIARITIES.

New England Theology is not wholly a theoretical scheme, its doctrines were proclaimed from the pulpit and enforced in practice. The exercise of disinterested affection was made the sum of Christian character, and many Hopkinsians believed that souls were endangered by the failure to present to the people their peculiar views. Especially was there the most earnest contention concerning the means of grace. Whether the impenitent can use the means of grace at all, was a topic that called out more intense feeling than any other that came under discussion. The expression, "Unregenerate Doings," has, for more than a century, suggested one of the fiercest theological debates. On this theme kindred theologians have decidedly differed, from the commencement of the discussion. The array of opposing parties has been within the Calvinistic fold.

Inasmuch as Dr. Hemmenway is made prominent in this discussion, and since his name is not so familiar as that of Hopkins or that of Emmons, a brief reference to him will be in place before taking up the debate in which he was engaged.

Moses Hemmenway was born in Framingham, Mass., in 1735, graduated at Harvard College in 1755, a classmate of President John Adams. He was ordained pastor of the church in Wells, Me., in 1759, where he had already preached about two years. He continued in this office till his death in 1811. He was one of the ablest of the New England ministers of his day, and both as a preacher and a scholar was worthy of larger notice than he has received. He was eminent in culture as well as in intellectual endowments. A pupil whom he fitted for college, says of him :

“Virgil was his favorite among the Latin classics. After one of my recitations to him in that author he observed that he retained in his memory hundreds of lines which he had taken no pains to commit, beyond that repetition of them which was necessary in preparing and reciting his lessons. Then passing to me his copy of Virgil, that I might see if any mistakes were made, he repeated with perfect readiness and precision more than a hundred lines which he had thus, without any designed effort, committed to memory.”¹

Rev. Daniel Dana, D.D., writes of him :

“His favorite authors were Turretin, Owen, Edwards and other great original writers. But his researches were unconfined. He expatiated in a wide sphere. His learning, especially his theological learning, was at once extensive and accurate. Among the eminent divines of our country, few were so familiar as he with the writings of the ancient Fathers. * * * Dr. Hemmenway was much em-

1. Sprague's Annals, I, p. 542.

ployed in councils, especially in cases of difficulty. His opinions on ecclesiastical subjects were deliberately formed and firmly maintained. They had great weight with his ministerial brethren and with the churches. With some they were almost oracular. Still he was never overbearing nor pertinacious. Devoted to truth and right, he loved peaceful and healing measures. * * * He was familiar with the ancient classics of Greece and Rome. He had a lively relish for their beauties, and his memory was amply stored with their most remarkable passages. Indeed it was a rich repository of whatever he deemed exquisite, both in ancient and modern writings.”¹

The above mentioned qualities appear in his sermons and in his controversial essays. His style is clear and elegant, his treatment of doctrines is characterized by accurate information and distinct conceptions. In his philosophical treatises he evinces a knowledge of psychology that was rare in his day and adopted some views that became popular at a later date. His discussions were also characterized by frankness and a ready confession of difficulties. He adopted his theories as those on the whole most rational, not as those above criticism. He always supported his views with studied argumentation and avoided mere dogmatic assertion.

I.

THE CONFLICT OF NEW ENGLAND THEOLOGY WITH
MODERATE CALVINISM.

The difference between the old divinity and the new did not at first seem very marked. To this

1. Ibid., I, p. 545.

day each side claims Edwards as its leader. If it should now be granted that he was the leader of the new, it would be necessary to confess that the great body of his theology was in accord with the old. And the two systems might for a time, by friendly explanations have been made to appear not far apart. When, however, the means of grace became the theme of discussion, it seemed for a time that the contention must be irreconcilable. Those who tended strongly to rationalistic views believed that the means of grace opened a plain way into the Kingdom of God, and many of the preachers of the day, some of new divinity proclivities, revered them as providing the divinely appointed method of salvation. Rev. Jedidiah Mills, of Ripton, Conn., speaks of the precious means of grace and is shocked at the thought that any minister of the gospel should treat them with slight or disrespect. The Hopkinsians seeing the danger that the impenitent should rest content with the use of means, assailed the very idea of there being anything intermediate between impenitence and penitence and called upon sinners to turn instantly from sin to the service of God. The contest over this point was sharp, yet, as in many other cases, the difference was theoretical rather than practical. The Hopkinsians were compelled to admit that no one can preach without commending the means of grace, and that none turn from sin except with the use of means. Still their acute speculations and subtle inferences have had so wide acceptance, that their doctrine of immediateness must be recognized as characteristic of New England thinking, and was naturally fixed

upon, in other parts of the country, as really distinctive of it. The Biblical Repertory of 1835, in a review of Barnes' Commentary on Romans, by an author who supposed the divinity of the Eastern States was a thing of the past, asks :

“Where are all the Hopkinsians and Emmonites of former days? Who now hears of the divine efficiency in the production of evil ; or that man must be willing to be damned for the glory of God ; that unregenerate men ought not to pray or use the means of grace? Even the theory that holiness is but a means of happiness ; that disinterested benevolence is the only moral good ; and that all sin is selfishness, seems to be fast sinking with the dimmer stars of the same constellation beneath the waves of oblivion.”

The views here referred to are, however, not yet forgotten ; indeed some of the results flowing from them have never been more fully accepted than at the present time. These peculiar ideas came to manifestation gradually, there are intimations of them as far back as Edwards' day. Smalley, in 1769, alludes to the duties of the unregenerate, as if the topic were well known and had excited popular interest ; but most of the Hopkinsian peculiarities were brought into prominence through a public discussion carried on by pamphlets published from time to time in the course of the eight years between 1765 and 1773. Hopkins was at the height of his strength during these eight years, being forty-four when the debate began. His experiences of this period were also such as to excite both his intellect and his feelings, as midway in it, in 1769, he was dismissed from his

parish in Great Barrington, after some trying occurrences, and fifteen months later, not without annoying opposition, was settled over the First Congregational Church in Newport, R. I. These annoyances probably had some effect upon his literary work. His controversial treatises were marked by great intellectual vigor, but their amiability was not so conspicuous. Though reported to have been patient and conciliatory in colloquial discussion, he appeared in his writings as a most disagreeable debater. His confidence in his own theological scheme and his somewhat harsh and blunt nature led to some lack of courtesy towards his opponents and blinded him to the weaknesses of his own arguments. It seems never to have occurred to him that he could be wrong himself, or that he had anything to learn from his opponents. He seems never to have thought it desirable to survey and define the grounds which the two parties held in common, but to have delighted in magnifying differences and charging manifold errors. He did not understand the art of saving his own time and that of his readers by embracing the essay to be answered as a whole and replying to it once for all. His habit was to reply and re-reply as often as he found a statement which he could not accept. His chief defect as a controversialist was his incompetence to put himself in the place of his opponent,—the incompetence to apprehend an adverse argument as it was apprehended by the person who used it. He estimated every argument from his own standpoint,—often the position controverted by the other side, so that much of his argumentation seemed

to his opponents a begging of the question. He must have known, at times, that he was antagonizing his opponent's expressions rather than his thoughts. The charge of misrepresentation was constantly made against him. Dr. Hemmenway, to whom we shall refer more particularly hereafter, makes it more than twenty times in one essay. Rev. William Hart of Saybrook, says to him :

"Indeed, sir, you do not write in a good spirit. In your reply to Mr. Mills, you treated that worthy father very ill, in an ungenerous, unworthy manner. This is the judgment of all I have heard speak of it, who have read it. And now besides misrepresenting many things to your readers, you have manifestly endeavored to injure me, and render me the object of unjust popular odium and contempt."

Hopkins acknowledged that he had been too severe in his treatment of Mr. Mills; Professor Park in his Memoir of Hopkins, admits there was no adequate reason for his overbearing temper towards Mr. Hart. In the same Memoir he says of Dr. Hemmenway, that in his reply to Hopkins he "was driven to the well understood methods of a defeated controversialist. He heaps upon our author injurious charges of ignorance, pride, anger, Arminianism, Pelagianism, *et id omne genus*."¹ Yet Dr. Hemmenway had no consciousness of defeat and supposed he was only imitating the author whom he was criticising.

Whatever is to be said of the spirit of these men, all will admit that they were strong thinkers and earnest seekers for the truth. A brief survey of the

1. Hopkins Works, I., Memoir, p. 198.

events in their order will be given, that the points in controversy may afterwards be presented by themselves.

In 1761 Rev. Jonathan Mayhew, D. D., of Boston, published two sermons on striving to enter in at the strait gate. In these discourses he advocated the doctrine, that sinners have power to accept the conditions of salvation, that regeneration follows upon acts which they may put forth,—and may be expected to put forth. He says :

“It is a reflection on the goodness and mercy of God to suppose that we might sincerely and earnestly endeavor, in the use of proper means to learn the way of salvation from Christ, or the inspired Scriptures, and yet not find it.”

He understood the text to require great zeal in seeking salvation. The question, Can an unconverted man strive as required? he answered in the affirmative. Still he held that no one would be disposed to strive without the influence of the Holy Spirit. He taught, as a general truth, that there are promises and invitations to the unregenerate in the Scriptures whence it may be inferred that, if they strive, in the manner they ought and may, to attain forgiveness and salvation, God will afford them all the influences of his Spirit and grace which are necessary for that end.

In 1765 Dr. Hopkins reviewed these discourses in a pamphlet entitled, in part, “An Inquiry Concerning the Promises of the Gospel: Whether any of them are made to the Exercises and Doings of Per-

sons in an Unregenerate State." He accounts for the late appearance of his essay,—four years after the publication of the sermons,—by saying it was a long time before he read the sermons, and that he then waited for some one else to reply to them. The import of this work may be inferred from the heading of the eighth section: "Arguments to prove that there are no promises of regenerating grace or salvation in the Scripture to the Exercises and Doings of Unregenerate Men."

Dr. Mayhew made no reply to this criticism of his sermons. He died the following year, 1766, but he had not written for the purpose of controversy, and probably would not have replied in any case. Dr. Mayhew has been spoken of as the first Unitarian among the Boston clergy, but it would be difficult to fix the date of the rise of Unitarianism in this country. The Mayhews tended to liberal theology and read such authors as Whitby, Clarke, Taylor and Emlyn, whose works Dr. Bellamy, writing in 1759, says were in great demand. Experience Mayhew, while claiming to be a Calvinist, admits that his views had been modified by the above named authors. His son, Jonathan, is understood to have gone quite beyond the father in his liberal sentiments.

But Hopkins' views did not accord with the traditional Calvinism and roused opposition among persons of unquestioned orthodoxy. Rev. Jedidiah Mills, differing widely in his views and spirit from Mayhew, belonging to the revival party in New England, took exception to some of the positions assumed

by Dr. Hopkins. He thought Dr. Hopkins greatly undervalued the means of grace, and in 1767 published a pamphlet of 124 pages, criticising him mainly on that point. The same year Rev. Moses Hemmenway published seven sermons on the obligation and encouragement of the unregenerate to use the means of grace. He agreed substantially with Mr. Mills. Two years later, in 1769, the year of his dismissal from Great Barrington, Hopkins published a reply to Mr. Mills, in the preparation of which he probably had in mind Hemmenway's sermons. This was his most carefully written treatise on the subject in debate, under the title, "The true state and character of the Unregenerate, stripped of all Misrepresentation and Disguise." Rev. William Hart published the same year a brochure containing brief remarks 'on a number of false propositions and dangerous errors, collected out of sundry discourses lately published, wrote by Dr. Whitaker and Mr. Hopkins.' Near this time appeared an anonymous pamphlet ridiculing Hopkins' doctrines; characterizing them as Hopkintonian or Hopkinsian. The latter term has come into popular use and was not long a term of reproach. This pamphlet is supposed to have been written by Mr. Hart, of Saybrook, and Hopkins thought it written for the purpose of preventing his settlement at Newport. Hopkins replied to Hart in 1770, making no allusion to the anonymous tract, but he allowed himself to be too much irritated and betrayed a sensitiveness that has been attributed to the effect of that publication. This reply is not to be found among the author's collected

works. Mr. Hart at once wrote in response to this paper, accusing Hopkins of misrepresentation, and of injurious, unfriendly and ungentlemanly treatment. In 1771 Mr. Hart published his animadversions on President Edwards' treatise on Virtue. This was written with a view to its bearing on the controversy in progress. Mr. Hemmenway in the following year, 1772, published his "Vindication of the power, obligation and encouragement of the unregenerate to attend the means of grace; Against the exceptions of Mr. Samuel Hopkins." About the same time Moses Mather, (afterwards Dr. Mather) pastor of a church then in Stanford, Conn., now in Darien, wrote in opposition to Edwards, Bellamy and Hopkins. The next year, 1773, Hopkins published his work on the nature of true holiness, with an appendix in which he replied to Mather, Hart and Hemmenway.

This closed the controversy so far as Hopkins was concerned. Mr. Hemmenway rejoined in 1774, in an able review of Hopkins, in which, however, he gave way to too free an expression of his personal feelings.

There should have been no acrimony in the discussion of these topics, for the points of difference can be clearly stated, the position of each disputant readily defined, and the arguments upon each side easily understood. The general topic is; *the way of life*. How shall an unregenerate man pass into the state of holiness and salvation? One can easily reply: 'believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved;' but this at once suggests the questions; how

shall one believe? how are we to attain to penitence and faith? The parties differed as to the antecedents of conversion,—the antecedents as they ordinarily occur in the providence of God. There were Arminians who were opposed to the Hopkinsian views upon this topic, but the views of the Moderate Calvinists, sometimes called the Old Calvinists, only will be noticed here. They taught that there are means of grace, which with the impenitent may be called means of regeneration, which are to be cherished as of utmost value. These are the truths of revelation and the duties inculcated by them. These duties are, study of the word of God, prayer, attendance on public and private worship, and the various practices of Christian life. It was held that the use of means of this kind ordinarily, if allowed its legitimate effect, advanced one towards regeneration by the Holy Spirit. It was not taught that there was a causal connection between the use of means and the work of the Spirit, but an actual connection established in the divine economy. It was held that the soul in the unregenerate state has no relish for holiness; cannot embrace with cordial affection the duties and practices of the renewed life any more than we can take a nauseous drug with pleasure. And it was held that if one professed to find pleasure in the duties of religion, while his real pleasure was in things at war with true godliness, this would be hypocrisy, and offensive to God. But these theologians held that impenitent persons could, from motives of prudence, prompted by reason and sound judgment, seek for that relish of truth and Christian

life which belongs to a renewed state. A sinner might wish he were a saint; sincerely desire it, yet have a distaste for the life of saintliness, as one who had no pleasure in music might wish he could enjoy its harmonies. A person in this state of mind might enter on a reformed life, break off evil habits, study the doctrines of Christianity, acquire an increasing appreciation of its value, and yet fall short of the new life. But these theologians held that one entering on this reformed life—a life of inquiry and self-discipline, was entering on a career that would probably lead to the salvation of the soul. It was believed that God would have mercy on one seeking the new life, though not relishing it. It was believed, if one waited on God for his transforming power, the transforming power would be granted, at least might be expected with a good degree of confidence. It was also held that the Spirit of God is already working upon the mind of the sinner who takes this attitude. This is common grace—pre-venient grace. And it is to be expected that one who yields to the promptings of pre-venient grace, will receive further influences of the same spirit and be made, in the merciful providence of God, the subject of effectual, transforming grace.

The doctrine was not, that God is under obligation to go on and bring the inquiring sinner into the renewed state, nor was it, that there is any promise to be fulfilled on condition of some special act of an unconverted man, but it was, that God's way of dealing with men encourages one to believe that sinners in the state supposed, will be led

onward to the full enjoyment of Christian life ; that pre-venient grace, if accepted and cherished, though in imperfect ways, is a kind of pledge of converting grace. It was held that the gospel is addressed to a sinful and lost world ; that, while it does not consist of specific promises to the impenitent, it is a general promise of salvation to be granted on prescribed conditions, among which some acts of the impenitent may be included. Christ came to call sinners to repentance. The Moderate Calvinists believed that they preached a gospel of practical power. They considered men guilty and justly condemned because of their sins ; they held to the disrelish of divine things and impotence to good works on the part of the unrenewed, yet they held that the gospel set before men a course, on which they had the power to enter, in which they might have good hope for further divine aid. They taught that the impenitent heart had not what they called "a next power" to repent, but that it had a next power to wish it could repent, and this wish would receive response from God in the needed power actually to repent. Next power is a general sentiment or emotion which embraces a specific act, or may embrace it. Self-respect and desire of eternal happiness may require honesty in business, with some men they do. They are thus the next preceding power or principle from which honesty flows, but self-respect and desire of eternal happiness do not embrace, as a part of themselves, a cordial relish of the service of God, are not a next power to it.

The argumentation of the Moderate Calvinists will be more clear if we notice briefly their scheme

of psychology, already alluded to in speaking of the Taste Scheme.

This idea of a next power, from which actions should go forth, implied that man enters upon life with a soul which is a substance endowed with qualities and attributes of its own; that these attributes under stimulus afforded by the experiences of life, become inclinations or tendencies prompting their possessor to some actions and deterring him from others. It was held that man, notwithstanding his dependence on God, is directed in his moral conduct by these tendencies, and is the subject of praise or blame according as he is governed by those that are good or those that are evil. It was held that these tendencies are principles of action or starting points, from which actions can go forth, and that one may be justly called upon to perform specific deeds contained in or falling under these principles. These principles or attributes constitute the emotional nature; they are the character of the man; they constitute his taste. This view is at the foundation of the taste scheme in contrast with the exercise scheme, and is at the basis of the philosophy which distinguishes the human faculties as intellect, sensibility and will—a distinction favored by Hemmenway as early as 1772, adopted also by Dr. Burton. Many of the emotions, however, on this view are looked upon as voluntary, being equivalent in many cases to generic choices.

In accord with this psychology the soul is capable of moral acts proceeding from *various* principles. Gratitude is a moral act, accepting responsibility for

a just debt is a moral act, but they are not the same, not dependent on each other, and they are not exhibitions of either self-love or the love of being in general, but are simply human duties, each resting on its own foundation. There are numerous moral acts of this kind, and they constitute the character of individuals. These acts, carried out from internal purpose to outward realization, are duties performed. And the man who discharges his duties is considered a better man than the one who refuses to discharge them. At this point the difference between Moderate Calvinism and Hopkinsianism is conspicuous. The latter recognized no duties and no moral worth except such as come through love of being in general. The former taught that unregenerate men might perform certain duties and still remain unregenerate. Their conduct might be right as to the matter while it was still sinful because of certain defects in manner. A man may aid in the support of churches and schools by generous contributions of money, by deeds of self-sacrifice for the public good, and yet lack that devotion to God which is the chief element of Christian life. They even believed that all these things might be done as acts of obedience to a divine command. They believed that those who took this course performed certain duties, or partially performed them, and were regarded with more favor by the Divine Ruler than when they were more heedless of his requirements. They held that those who made use of the means of grace had, ordinarily, more grace given, and finally converting grace.

This view did not imply that men are not totally depraved, that is, defective, sinful in every moral act while unconverted, but it did imply that they were not as sinful as they would be in a careless and profane state. It did not imply that any of the deeds of the unregenerate are holy, but that they are not sinful in all their positive qualities, and that the same deeds with the same motives might be absorbed into and made part of a holy life. For instance, an unregenerate man who was educating a regenerate son for the ministry in the hope that he would be useful in the church, would, if he were converted, continue his course and bring his son into the ministry for the reasons before entertained with the additional reason that love of Christ and sympathy with his people impelled him to the same thing. The following arguments in favor of the positions of Moderate Calvinism are taken mainly from the writings of Dr. Hemmenway. He adhered to a more strict scheme of psychology than any other one engaged in this debate, though the same general sentiment lies at the foundation of all the writings on his side of the discussion. After recounting some of the duties which devolve on all men, such as avoiding evil company, study of the way of salvation and observance of religious worship, he presents his main question in this threefold form:

“Whether man, in his fallen and depraved state, has any power to perform these duties? Or, to speak in more plain and determinate language; whether there be in men unregenerate any principle, which may be a foundation of their having a will to en-

deavor and strive to be delivered from a state of sin and misery, and obtain eternal life and salvation, and accordingly use means for this purpose? Or, to vary the expression yet again, is it consistent with a state of sin, that a man should desire to be saved, and so become disposed to seek salvation by attending these instrumental duties prescribed for this end?"

The author's argument upon these topics, running through seven sermons and other papers connected with the discussion which the sermons called forth, became involved and prolix; for brevity's sake, therefore, the salient points will be presented, not as an exact reply to the main question, but as having an obvious bearing upon it as well as upon the entire topic, and as affording in the end the answer which the author intended.

The unregenerate are able to obey commands of God. There may be divine commands to perform specific duties,—commands which such men as Saul and Cyrus can obey or disobey, and these men may win the divine favor or incur the divine wrath by their conduct in view of them. Amaziah did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart. The history of his life shows that God dealt with him as one partly obedient, partly disobedient. The Ninevites were less odious to God after listening to the preaching of Jonah, though it is not to be inferred that they by their repentance passed into the regenerate state. Ahab, Jehu, the Israelites as a nation, on occasions, humbled themselves before God and hearkened to his commandments, and were rewarded for it. These commands contemplated mainly secu-

lar duties, but spiritual duties might be included. The unregenerate have power to obey in some degree the religious requirements of God. They have not the next, or habitual power to perform absolutely holy acts. They have not in themselves the principle or taste whence holy acts proceed. They lack the proper affection for that which is holy while they perform works externally righteous. In such a state they have the principles of action requisite for a reform of life, for attendance on religious services with the desire of receiving spiritual benefit therefrom. They have reason, conscience, self-love, love of esteem, knowledge of revealed truth, and are often under strong influences of the Holy Spirit. These motives enable them sincerely and earnestly to seek a better life. Acts prompted by these motives may not be holy, are not, without additional motive force, but it is better, in any case, to perform them than to omit them. Holiness comprehends conformity to the command of God in respect to matter, manner, principle and end of action. If the unregenerate lack the principle out of which one quality,—holiness proceeds, they can perform things right in matter and intended for the best ends. It is not enough that deeds be performed for benevolent ends. They must be right in matter and manner, and be the outflow of a right heart or temper; still if deeds are partially correct they have a degree of merit and receive in some sense the favorable regard of the Divine Ruler.

These works of the unregenerate are to be performed, not with the idea of atoning for past offences, or of making one's self worthy of mercy, or as a

covenant condition of acceptance with God, or with the supposition that they are the conditions on which a promise is based, or to move the divine compassion, or as acts of spiritual life, but are not without a purpose.

“In general, our observance of these duties is required as the ordinary method and means, whereby God is pleased to prepare a sinner for, and then communicate to him, that saving grace, light and life, whereby he becomes a new creature, and is enabled and disposed unto those exercises and acts which are spiritually good, and with which, according to the gospel promises, eternal life is connected.”¹

More particularly, God requires sinners to read, hear, meditate, pray, avoid temptation, that he may save them from their state of sin and misery, and that his justice may be manifest in their punishment if they reject the gospel. Why he should save men by the use of means cannot be very definitely explained, but this can be said:

“As there is a beauty and wisdom apparent in that regular subordination of causes and effects which is established in the natural world, so the same appears in a higher degree in that connection and dependence of antecedents and consequents, means and ends which is constituted in the government of the intelligent and moral world.”²

For such reasons as these God calls upon men to attend upon the means of grace. They, on their part, should so attend for the simple reason that it is commanded, but they should attend also for the advan-

1. Sermons, p. 46.

2. Ibid., p. 49.

tage to be derived from it. If their obedience in the use of means is defective and not holy, it is not unlawful; as a positive act it is righteous, and is the source of temporal blessing. Conscience, reason, God's law, the Holy Spirit are treated with more honor in this mode of life than when disregarded. And in addition to temporal blessings, it may be expected that spiritual good will follow. Hemmenway quotes, in confirmation of this teaching, from Owen thus:

"There is a double end in pressing on men the observance of duties with the supposition of the state of impotency. (1) To prevent them from such courses of sin as would harden them, and so render their conversion more difficult if not desperate. (2) To exercise a means appointed of God for their conversion, or the communication of saving grace unto them."¹

This second advantage from the use of the means of grace, viz. Spiritual good, being the main point in the discussion, Hemmenway argues it at length. Only an outline of his presentation of the case will be given. He maintains that the Scriptures show that some are more likely to attain acceptance with God than others, and those in the more favorable state are those who attend on the means of grace. Those who resist the influences of God's Spirit are those who are given up to hardness of heart. "For this cause God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie, that they might all be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." The work of the Holy Spirit, preparatory

1. Sermons, p. 61.

to conversion, renders the condition of some more hopeful than that of others, and the truth is commonly made an instrument in this work. The Holy Spirit sends the Gospel call to some, while passing by others, the Holy Spirit awakens the attention of some to the call, the Holy Spirit illuminates some minds by a common doctrinal understanding and belief of the truth. Because of this illumination a disquieting sense of guilt and fear of punishment are awakened accompanied by anxious thoughts and desires to obtain pardon and deliverance. Such sentiments move the mind to inward purposes and modify the outward conduct.

That this work is preparatory to regeneration he proves in this way. It is, according to our human apprehensions, more fit that those be regenerated who know their lost condition and feel their need of pardon; God ordinarily gives the new heart only to those who are prepared for it by attention to the means of grace; common Christian experience shows that regeneration has taken place in connection with endeavors in response to convictions of truth effected by the Holy Spirit. He holds that those who carefully make use of the means of grace approach more and more to the position of those who are pleasing to God, and are finally endowed, or may confidently expect to be endowed, with regenerating grace. The following extract presents the conclusion to which he comes:

“The divine command then, considered in the relation it bears to the revelation of mercy, and the end for which it is given, not only lays an obliga-

tion of obedience upon the conscience of every one who hears the call of the gospel, but also carries an encouraging motive to endeavors of obedience, antecedent to that faith in Christ, with which justification is connected by the divine promise. And there is, therefore, encouragement to the unregenerate to labor for the meat which endureth to everlasting life, in such a manner as they can, though they are morally unable to do so in the manner they ought. Their endeavors in a way of attendance to prescribed duties, however defective and unholy, have, by the appointment of God, a good tendency, and are well adapted to subserve those ends and purposes for which they are designed and required by God. Indeed were it necessary that those who obtain eternal life should all work their way to it by perfect personal obedience to the law, or were any holy qualifications requisite to render us worthy objects of divine mercy, no endeavors of the unregenerate would avail for any such purpose.”¹

The most valuable achievement of Hopkinsianism, in the view of its advocates, is the controverting of the above noticed doctrines of the Moderate Calvinists concerning the doings of the unregenerate. They seem to have had no hesitation in asserting that the refutation was triumphant. The arguments on this side of the question will be more readily apprehended if we notice the psychological position on which it is based in contrast with that of the Old Calvinists already spoken of. They knew nothing of next power. They had no theory of powers stored up in the soul to be called out by appeals to the sensibilities or the reason—powers competent to

1. Sermons, p. 163.

act within a range by methods at the possessor's command, but incompetent to go beyond their range except by external aid. They knew of nothing intervening between the will of man and the will of God. Dr. Emmons is perfectly explicit on this point. He held that the soul is known only as active, and that its activity is dependent on a divine operation. Dr. Hopkins did not state this view so distinctly, but implied it, was understood by others to imply it, and did clearly in some places teach Emmonsism, as Professor Park has remarked in his "Memoirs of Hopkins,"¹ To Hemmenway's arguing for a principle of action, affirming that power has relation to acts, and to talk otherwise is unintelligible jargon, Hopkins replies:

"I refer him and the reader to Mr. West's late essay on Moral Agency, Sec. 2. Perhaps when he has well considered this he will give his own 'talk of power' as hard an epithet as he has here used."²

West says, in the section referred to, that "Power, strictly speaking, is no more than a law of constant divine operation. It is nothing more than a divine constitution, or an established connection between human volitions and certain external events."³ Again, he says: "Man is not possessed of any independent power for anything."⁴ He says also, "The divine constitution of things, by which external events are connected with our volitions, is all that can be properly meant by the terms Habit and Temper used to express anything previous

1. p. 200.

2. III, p. 134. n.

3. Moral Agency, Sec. 2, p. 48.

4. Ibid., p. 54.

to voluntary exertion or inclination, and distinct from it.”¹ Hopkins was not as pronounced in his view as West and Emmons, but still agreed with them. He says :

“It is difficult, and perhaps impossible, to form any distinct and clear idea of that in the mind or heart which is antecedent to all thought and exercise of the will or action, which we call principle, taste, temper, disposition, habit, by which we mean nothing properly active, but that from which right exercise of the will or action springs, as the reason and foundation of it, and without which there could have been no such exercise. Perhaps the real truth of the matter, when examined with true, philosophic, metaphysical strictness, will appear to be this: that what we call principle, disposition, or frame of mind, which is antecedent to all right exercise of the heart, and is the foundation and reason of it, is wholly to be resolved into divine constitution, or law of nature”²

Hopkinsians, therefore, find all sin and all holiness in exercise, not in anything that goes before or follows after. In urging religious duties, therefore, upon men, they urge action, and the right action ; urge it as the one and only thing to be performed—performed immediately. They reject all indirect means of leading men to the performance of religious duties, such as cultivating higher moral sentiments and developing the better elements of character, but urge instant repentance with no consideration of means, that is, of a medium to be brought into use between the command and obedience to the command. Hopkinsianism says to the sinner, You are not be-

1. Moral Agency, Sec. 2, p. 54.

2. III, p. 553 n.

coming better but worse, while you contemplate the truths of Christianity and spend your time in thought about the course you ought to take. You are not improving in moral character when, in view of the claims of God, you renounce evil habits, as profaneness and intemperance, and adopt new habits, as prayer and attendance upon the preaching of the gospel. In all this you are sinning against increased light and falling into a state of increased guilt. It says to the sinner, do not listen to those teachers who urge you to think upon your ways and wait upon God for his interposition and assistance. Such teachers are your enemies—or mistaken friends; their words are misleading and endanger the soul. Some have gone so far as to say that such teachers incur the guilt of urging men to do evil that good may come. Dr. Hopkins does not sympathize with this extreme view, as we shall see,—with what consistency may be questioned.

In urging immediate repentance Hopkinsianism adheres to its own psychology, for it knows nothing of next power, or habit, or principle, but teaches a divine co-operation, and says to all the unregenerate, You have full power to repent, it is as easy to perform that act as to perform any other. All moral acts are equally simple and direct. It has also a theological argument for the possibility of immediate repentance. God requires it, and he never requires an impossibility. By confession of all, repentance is a present duty, it must, therefore, be possible, for every man's ability is commensurate with his obligation.

Hopkinsianism, as compelled by its exercise scheme, rejected the idea of different degrees of moral worth, according as different faculties are developed. If one is grateful for favors, quick to recognize good intentions in others, generous in aiding the needy, of ready sympathy with those in distress, perfectly upright in dealing with men, the advocates of the taste scheme are able to say that he has some good qualities though he may not be devoted to the service of God, but the Hopkinsians reject these itemized traits from a place in one's moral character. They make the moral character a unit, wholly a development of self-love or of benevolence. There is no virtue but that which comes from love of being in general, whatever issues from self-love is sin. All motives that prompt to moral action are resolvable into one or other of these two fundamental elements of character. The man who gratifies himself by giving to the poor is as bad as the man who gratifies himself by oppressing them. President Finney, who accepted logical conclusions however distasteful, was accustomed to say that every man in impenitence is as bad as he can be. Whether the incendiary and thief is worse than the founder of colleges and the builder of churches, depends on his ability; if he knows more he is worse, otherwise not.

The argument in favor of these positions has been presented by several writers, but they are essentially the same in each. Dr. Smalley insisted that God must require every man to do his full duty, therefore a partial performance could not in any way be obedience to a command of God. Dr. Bellamy in his

extended reply to Dr. Moses Mather, made this the decisive consideration, that God has not entered into any graceless covenant with men. By this succinct phrase he means that God promises salvation to those who enter into covenant with him and makes no promises based on anything short of this. He has not proposed one covenant to impenitent men promising a certain degree of favor for a certain degree of reform, and then a covenant with the promise of saving grace if the reform is carried forward to true penitence, but stops with nothing short of full grace for a full acceptance of the terms of salvation. Dr. Hopkins has presented his views with a somewhat wider range of thought than the above-named authors, and we will accept his arguments as representative of all. He replies in this way to Dr. Mayhew, who held that an impenitent man earnestly desiring salvation, would secure it by persevering in his endeavors.

“If it can be proved that the doctor’s unregenerate sinner is a creature of his own fancy, a kind of monster, an enemy to God, dressed up in the attire of a saint, a contradiction almost in terms, then all he has said and attempted to prove of such a one is really nothing to the purpose.”¹

He grants that unregenerate sinners may desire deliverance from natural evil, may desire safety and happiness under a conviction that they are to be attained only through Jesus Christ, and yet he holds that they have no desire of salvation.

“It is but to delude sinners, to represent to them that their concern and desires of this kind are the

least evidence that their hearts are a whit nearer a true submission to Christ, or a real acceptance of salvation as offered by him, or that there is the less opposition to the gospel in their hearts.”¹

He denies that the unregenerate sincerely pray for the divine blessing.

“Are not all the exercises of an impenitent rebellious heart impenitent rebellious exercises? And does not the old heart perfectly hate and oppose the new heart? What sincerity and heartiness, then, is there in asking for a new heart with a heart so perfectly opposite to the thing asked for?”²

He denies that a person under conviction of sin, desiring to be delivered from its consequences, forsaking evil habits, yet not truly penitent, is in any degree improved in his moral character.

“The sinner, however exercised and concerned he is about himself, and whatever pains he takes to better his case, and obtain deliverance, if still he does not actually accept salvation, does refuse so to do from the fixed opposition of his heart to the salvation offered; which opposition of heart is of the same nature and kind with that of the secure sinner, and is really as voluntary, and every way as inexcusable, and indeed is more apparent, and exercises itself in a stronger manner than that of the secure sinner; as the former actually resists more light and conviction of conscience than the secure sinner.”³

In replying to Dr. Hemmenway, he puts the case more vigorously, thus:

“The sinner, in all his exertions under awakenings and convictions of conscience, while under the dominion of Satan, is more like a wild bull in a net

1. III, p. 205.

2. III, p. 230.

3. III, p. 248.

than a submissive, obedient child ; and would get out of the hands of God if he could, and all his strivings are really strivings against God, as they are utterly opposed to submission to him ; like the exertions of a wild beast, untamed, unsubdued, in the hands of him who is taking methods to bring him to submission.”¹

Dr. Hopkins considered that a bare statement of his position carried with it sufficient evidence of its soundness and validity. He has, however, presented positive arguments in its favor. He gives large space to the criticism of his opponents’ arguments and to the answering of objections in which he illustrates forcibly his own views, but in which he adds nothing material to his direct arguments. He also gives a good deal of space to Scripture interpretations, but these may be passed by, as he generally attempts to show that the Bible teachings are consistent with his scheme of doctrine, rather than that they inculcate it. For example, he considers Dr. Mayhew’s text: “Strive to enter in at the strait gate,” etc., to be an address to those already regenerate, urging them to persevere in the course which they have adopted. He says that Christ loved the young man who had kept the commandments from his youth, because his claim was an expression of most odious ignorance. Christ looked on him as a “poor, ignorant, stupid, proud enemy to God. This excited in him the love of pity and benevolence toward him.”²

We take up then his positive arguments in favor of his position, and first those that are given in his

1. III, p. 123.

2. III, p. 376.

criticism of Dr. Mayhew's sermons. His position is: there are no promises addressed to the impenitent, God has not said to the unregenerate, if they will, remaining unregenerate, do this and that, he will bring them out of their unregenerate state and make them heirs of salvation.

1. God could not do this, for all the unregenerate are condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon them.

“To be condemned and under God's wrath, and to be interested in the promises of God's favor and eternal life at the same time, is a contradiction and absolutely impossible.”¹

He argues the same from the Scriptures and cites among other passages, Rom. 8:1, 4, 6, 9, 13.

2. To suppose there are promises of salvation to the doings of the unregenerate, is to make their doings the condition of salvation, and not faith or repentance, or, indeed, anything else which the Scriptures represent as such condition.

3. The unregenerate “do, with their whole hearts oppose the way of salvation by Christ, and reject the salvation offered by him.”

4. Salvation is offered to all on the lowest possible terms when it is offered to those who truly ask for it and accept it in its wholeness. The unregenerate never come up to these terms, therefore salvation is never offered them.

5. To offer salvation to the unregenerate for any thing they do while such would overthrow the gos-

1. III. p. 238.

pel. Sinners are saved by faith in the Mediator. To offer pardon to those who are still enemies to the Mediator, who oppose and reject him, would dishonor him, indeed make him of no account.

These are the arguments by which Hopkins sustains his position. He adds in replying to his opponent these two remarks: If promises were made to the unregenerate they would be of little practical value, for those to whom they were made could never know whether they had come to the requisite degree of struggle for salvation to meet the condition; and if they should reach the requisite degree, they could never be sure of persevering, and so could never be sure of final salvation.

His reply to Mr. Mills, who, he said, took essentially the same ground with Dr. Mayhew, occupies more than two hundred pages in the Boston Tract Society's edition of his works, yet his positive arguments may be presented in brief space. He aims to establish two positions: 1. The unregenerate are more sinful in a state of awakening than in a state of stupidity. 2. The unregenerate do not comply with any divine command.

In discussing the first point he calls attention to this principle: "The vileness and guilt of sin does chiefly and principally consist in its being committed against God." The intensity of his conviction on this point may be exhibited by a brief quotation:

"If a person should turn enemy to the whole human race, and with relentless hatred, rage, and thirst for blood, should murder his own parents, and all his relations and friends, in the most cruel man-

ner imaginable; and should he have it in his power, and go on to murder and destroy a whole nation; and should he proceed and actually destroy every one of the human race on earth; yea, put an utter end to the whole creation, and then lay violent hands on himself and put an end to his own life; and could this be done and not imply any rebellion against God or opposition to him, but be consistent with perfect love to him, the crime he would be guilty of in all this would be nothing in comparison with the least degree of opposition and disrespect to God.”¹

He then affirms that sin which is directly and immediately in opposition to God, is immensely more heinous than that which is indirectly opposed to him. This discloses to us the guilt of the awakened sinner. His mind is drawn away from worldly considerations, he is brought face to face with God, and his refusal to submit to him becomes open and positive rebellion. He may at the same time reform his outward life by renouncing evil habits, but this is merely from self-love—the same self-love that sustains him in opposition to God. Hence he concludes:

“The difference appears to me so great, and the awakened, convinced sinner to be so much more guilty and vile than he was or could be in a state of security, that when the matter is perfectly stated, I see not how any can be at a loss about it.”²

The second point, that sinners while unregenerate comply with no command of God, Dr. Hopkins argues from the principle that all obedience to God

1. III, p. 304.

2. III, p. 319.

is love, that there is no virtue but love. He maintains that since the impenitent man loves neither God nor his neighbor, he discharges no duty. Actions prompted by conscience or by self-love have no true love in them, and therefore are sinful. The prayers of the wicked are sinful, therefore God does not command them, and in prayer they obey no command.

“If God commands the unregenerate to do that which they may do in a state of rebellion, and while they are with all their hearts opposing him and in the exercise of perfect enmity against him, I see not why this is not commanding sin and rebellion, and making this their duty.”¹

The debate with Mr. Hemmenway brings out more of subtle thought and discriminating statements than any other, but presents no new theological views. The differences of doctrine in this discussion were due to different ideas of man's intellectual endowment, and if the contention had been over intellectual philosophy it might have been as profitable and with less irritation. Mr. Hemmenway held to the taste scheme. He believed that the soul is endowed with different susceptibilities which are roused to activity by appropriate motives. He believed that personal attachments, admiration, pity, gratitude and generosity were sentiments that could be directly awakened by the events of one's experience, and might lead to corresponding deeds. These deeds might be useful, helpful, praiseworthy,

or might be unwise and deleterious. Especially he held that self-love, regard for one's own interests, is a principle to which appeal may be made with good results. It is to be restrained when it leads to injustice towards others, but as a prompting to sobriety, uprightness and a reputable life, it is to be valued and cherished. His view was that of President Edwards, who, after explaining that it is natural and not a result of the fall, says:

“The change that takes place in man when he is converted and sanctified, is not that his love for happiness is diminished, but only that it is regulated with respect to its exercise and influence, and the courses and objects it leads to.”¹

Edwards had before shown that self-love is love of happiness and, absolutely considered, is never too high in degree. Mr. Hemmenway believed that all these susceptibilities opened the way for persuading men to courses of conduct on which they might not enter without the persuasion.

Dr. Hopkins rejected all this philosophy and held that the impenitent perform no duty. His reply to Hemmenway is all evolved from two positions; that there is no approach to a holy life through any deeds performed in the impenitent state, and that all obedience to God is through love of being in general, or through disinterested benevolence. Hopkins considered that he had much the advantage of Hemmenway at this point. The latter admits that immediate repentance is required, while he justifies a preparatory work.

1. *Christian Love*, p. 230.

He says this is "the Gordian knot in revealed religion," that perfect holiness is required of those born in a state of corruption. Hopkins says this is a mystery of his own making. Men are blamed only for doing what their own consciences condemn, when properly awakened. "Persons of the lowest capacity, and children may understand it, condemn themselves, and repent."¹

The chief weapon in his opposition to Hemmenway is the principle that no duty is performed except through love to being in general. Deeds prompted by pity, generosity or gratitude are of no account, as thus prompted, in morals. Their worth is determined by the disinterested benevolence in them. Self-love is sinful in itself, the least degree is the source of heinous guilt, except it come through universal love. The love that falls to one's share as a part of the whole may be justly appropriated, one should exercise that towards himself; but direct self-love is always sinful—is the essence of sin. Consequently men are not the better but the worse for seeking their own advantage by using the means of grace. Professor Park quotes from Dr. William Patten, from 1781 to 1833 pastor of the Second Congregational Church in Newport, the following:

"This distinction of the new love which one is brought to exercise for himself in regeneration, Mr. H. (Hopkins) considered as having occurred to him without meeting with it in any commentator, and as more original in this sense than any other doctrine of his system."²

1. III, p. 135,

2. Hopkins' Works, I, p. 51.

II.

PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Whether Hopkins had so fully the advantage in this discussion as he supposed, is open to question. He did, without doubt, state many important truths and infuse many valuable sentiments into the minds of his fellow ministers, but these were for the most part consistent with the views of his opponents. If he at times found them accepting practical doctrines that needed modification, they were able in return to ask him some puzzling questions. If the public sentiment has justified him in maintaining, as Professor Park says he did, the air of a victor, it may be questioned whether the public sentiment is based on a careful reading of all his expositions and argumentations. A few of his replies to the inquiries of his opponents will illustrate this point.

Mr. Hemmenway asked, what estimate should be put upon the deeds of unregenerate men which are intended to be useful and which call forth our approbation, if every deed not prompted by the love of being in general is selfish? Men like President Stiles and Mr. Hart, of Saybrook, were at loss as to the instructions Hopkinsians would give the impenitent, if attention to the means of grace would simply increase their guilt. The views of Dr. Hopkins upon these points may be easily drawn from his works ; some of the questions suggested he has answered directly ; for instance, it is asked, how could God have granted favors to wicked men like Ahab, Jehu, the Ninevites, because of their conduct

on certain occasions, if he looks with no kind of approbation upon any of the deeds of such men? This is a query urged by both Mr. Mills and Mr. Hemmenway. Dr. Hopkins replies that God may grant the unregenerate favors, but not because of any work they perform, while they are still recognized as impenitent. In the cases cited God did not deal with the men as the searcher of hearts, but "had respect to their present external appearance, profession and conduct, *i. e.*, as if they really were what they professed to be, true penitents." * * * "God, in treating them, not as the searcher of hearts, but according to their visible profession and conduct, had respect to them, and expressed his approbation of them, considered as interested in the atonement, and as his servants truly devoted to him, which was true, if their hearts were answerable to their external appearance. Since he really accepts and approves of all true penitents, purely for Christ's sake, he visibly approved of them who were visibly penitents, and devoted to him, or appeared to be interested in the atonement." ¹

If God, searching the heart, had considered these men as his enemies, as having no connection with Christ, and yet had bestowed favors upon them because of their goodness, he might have proceeded to bestow the highest blessings and have justified them because of their works. This would destroy the gospel and show that Christ died in vain.

"The necessity of Christ's atonement is grounded in man's being in such a state by sin that he cannot

1. III, pp. 120, 121,

have God's approbation and favorable notice, on account of anything he can do, even though he should become perfectly holy." ¹

The question may be asked, should we entertain the feeling of gratitude towards the unregenerate? If all their acts are prompted by self-love and are therefore selfish, their seeming kindnesses lay us under no obligation of gratitude. To this assertion of Mr. Hemmenway, Dr. Hopkins makes two replies. (1) If there is an appearance of kindness, it ought to waken our gratitude. If one who is unregenerate does us an apparent kindness and yet has towards us no sentiment of disinterested benevolence, and so does us no real kindness, yet we ought to exercise gratitude towards him because the appearance of good will affects the mind more than the reasoning process which reaches the conclusion that kindness is wanting. (2) The unregenerate never exercise gratitude for favors, because they are selfish themselves, and have no appreciation of disinterested good will. The regenerate are grateful to God for all the favors they receive from men, and will love them whether they are actuated by self-love or benevolence. ²

The Hopkinsians affirm that the only love exercised by the unregenerate is self-love. Their opponents deny this. Dr. Hopkins' statement of the case presents each side sufficiently.

"Mr. Hemmenway further says, 'that love the unregenerate have sometimes to others cannot possibly be educed from self-love. It is evident that the

1. III, p. 120.

2. III, p. 114.

unregenerate have sometimes such a love to others as causes them to have a real pleasure in, and concern for, their welfare, separate from all hopes or prospects of being benefited by them; which would not be if they loved others only for their own sakes, or wholly from self-love.' He instances in one dying, and yet manifesting concern for the welfare of his friends after he is dead, which can be of no benefit to him."

ANSWER.—"There is not the least difficulty in accounting for this from self-love. Self-love will lead men to love others and wish them well for the good *they have done* to them, as well as for the good they expect they will do to them. Therefore this will influence a man to wish well to another who has been, and is now, his friend, though because he is now going out of the world, he does not expect to receive any further benefit from him. Self-love does in a sense unite us to them who love us, and do us good, and leads us by a necessary association of ideas to look on them as belonging to us, and as part of ourselves. Hence there is a desire in selfish men, which arises from self-love, to exist after they are dead, in their surviving friends or relatives, which they look upon in some sense as themselves. And hence they are disposed to wish and provide for their existence and comfort after they themselves shall be dead, for the same reason they would do this for themselves, if they were to live, viz., from love to themselves."¹

"It is asked; if the impenitent increase their guilt by attention to the means of grace, how shall they be addressed by those who would lead them to a holy life? The Hopkinsian reply is, preach immediate repentance—repentance without means. The founder of the system, after emphatically rejecting

their plea of inability to help themselves, addresses them thus :

“It is your indispensable duty, your highest interest, immediately to repent, believe on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and give yourselves up to God. Nothing can be the least excuse for your neglecting it one minute; you have all the opportunity and advantage you can desire; and motives are set before you which are, I may say, infinitely weighty and forcible. And if divine, eternal vengeance should fall on your heads immediately, for the hardness of your hearts and continued rebellion in these circumstances, God will be just, and you most justly miserable forever. And how soon this will be your case, you know not. It is certain this will come upon you soon, unless you wake up and attend to your case and fly to the only refuge.”¹

It is asked, does preaching immediate repentance bring men to God more effectually than commending the use of means? We derive a negative reply from the following, after remarking that the need of regeneration rises from the total corruption of man’s heart, Hopkins says :

“If he is so far sunk in corruption that he has not naturally the least degree of disposition to that which is good, but his heart is wholly and perfectly opposed to it, then no possible means and external applications will be sufficient to bring him to the least degree of right disposition and exercise, or do anything towards it. This can be effected only by the power and Spirit of God, which at first created all things out of nothing, and implanted a right disposition in man when he was first made. It is as

1. III., p. 578.

absurd to suppose that in this case right disposition and exercise do take place in the heart without the all-creating influence of the Spirit of God, as it is to suppose that the whole world came into existence without creating power, or from no cause at all.”¹

He says of the sinner at the time of regeneration:

“He is not so much as willing to accept of offered mercy, but opposes God and his grace with all his heart, however anxious he may be about his eternal interest, and how much soever he prays and cries for mercy, and continues a perfect enemy to the just God and the Saviour, until his heart is renewed, and the enmity slain by the regenerating influences of God’s Spirit.”²

When it is asked, why exhort men to do what they never will do in response to the exhortation, and only after a new heart has been given them, he replies; if God’s law and commands were not enforced upon sinners, they would not understand their duties or know the corruption of their hearts and the condemnation under which they rest; “all which it is important and even necessary the sinner should know in order to his being saved.”³

Preaching in this way simply makes preaching immediate repentance a commending of the use of means, and Hopkins does urge the use of means as vigorously as any Moderate Calvinist.

“Means are absolutely necessary in order to the conversion and salvation of men, as much so as it

1. III, p. 546.

2. III, p. 566.

3. III, p. 638.

there was no other agent except the subject, and nothing done but what was effected by means.”¹

He teaches that men must be prepared for regeneration by instruction in the truths of the gospel and the duties of Christian life. Without this knowledge their life in a regenerate state would be worthless.

“The reason why it is not wise and suitable to give a person a new heart in such circumstances (those of stupid and benighted heathen) and without the use of means is, that in such a case there is no foundation, provision, or opportunity for right views and exercises, if a new heart should be given, therefore no good would be answered by it. This would be like creating a monster without any parts or capacity whereby he might live and act in a proper way, but so as to act monstrously, and even counteract and destroy itself.”²

He held that not only a knowledge of the truth, but a sense of guilt, a consciousness of being under condemnation, and a conviction of utter helplessness are necessary antecedents of regeneration, and that these come only through the use of means. As is implied in previous statements, conversion is dependent on means. In regeneration, man is passive, but conversion is his own act in response to regeneration, and this is impossible without previous instruction in the way of life.³

Hopkins was more free in urging the use of the means of grace than some of his followers have been. It has been said that commending the study of the

1. III, p. 568.

2. III, p. 569.

3. III, p. 571.

Bible to one averse to the Gospel is calling upon him to do evil that good may come, since with the unregenerate, even the study of the Bible is sin. But Hopkins, considering that true repentance is sought, intended and implied in commending the use of means, says:

“If any preacher of the gospel doubts whether he has any warrant to call upon and exhort sinners to attend the means of grace, he appears not well to understand what he is about; for he is really doing this while he is calling upon and exhorting them to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.”¹

He warns preachers, however, of the danger of urging a use of means which ends in acts “short of repentance.”

But the question returns, why call upon men to attend upon Christian instruction, when it is certain that persuasion will never lead them to repentance, and that they will increase their guilt as they increase their knowledge of the truth? The reply is: Their greater sinfulness does not consist in their new efforts and new knowledge, but in their continued hatred of God.² On the other hand, “A neglect of the means is an instance of the violation of the obligation they are under, which they are not guilty of who do attend with concern and engagedness, however guilty and vile they may be in other respects.”³ Moreover the increase of guilt while using the means of grace is no ground of discouragement, “For in the gospel there is no more

1. III, p. 272.

2. III, p. 264.

3. III, p. 272.

encouragement given to a less sinner than to a greater, that he shall find mercy rather than the other, while both continue impenitent, and opposers of the way of salvation therein revealed.”¹ The Hopkinsians are, in truth, more emphatic than the Moderate Calvinists in making a knowledge of Christian doctrine a condition of God’s regenerating work.

III.

HOPKINSIANISM AS A PRACTICAL SCHEME OF
DOCTRINE.

The descendants of the Puritans value theology for its influence on life, not primarily as an intellectual theory. New England history records marked revival experiences, often the entire transformation of communities because of religious awakenings. It is a question of interest, whether Hopkinsian teaching promoted piety and good morals among the people. It can certainly be said that one of the most extensive and effective religious movements known in the country followed this theological discussion. The minds of those affected by it must have been somewhat familiar with the theological drift of the time. Disinterested benevolence, entire submission, foreordination were terms in popular use at the beginning of the century, much as *homooousios* and *ek tou patros* were in Nicaean times. The generation saturated with theological thought was the generation that was most favorably affected by the revival influences of the Divine Spirit. And the peculiar views of the

1. III, p. 274.

Hopkinsians may have been a source of power in the enforcement of the truth. Dr. George Leon Walker, says:

“Account for it as we may, there can be no question that, speaking in a large and general sense, and recognizing very considerable limitations to the statement, the revival period which began in 1797, and which was followed at various epochs by similar awakenings for over forty years, was conspicuously Hopkinsian in character, and was illustrative in experience of what might be anticipated as the results of that system of doctrine.”¹

Dr. Lyman Beecher, who had been active in revival work, said in a public address, that the power of his preaching, if it had had any power, had been in urging immediate repentance, the duty of submitting to God without delay. Dr. N. W. Taylor, on the other hand, in his class room, at times spoke of unfavorable results flowing from Hopkinsian preaching. He believed that it deterred some good men from a public profession of their faith. He referred to individuals who were too conscientious to claim that their disinterestedness had reached the required point. He thought it natural that business men of strong and discriminating minds, though they were of upright life and generous in their support of Christian enterprises, should question whether they had yet attained a willingness to be lost, and should therefore defer a connection with the church.

It will be in place to notice more specifically the effect of this preaching in counteracting some of the

1. Religious Life of New England, p. 134.

natural, not necessary, unfavorable effects of Moderate Calvinism, and some of the unfortunate results of an extreme application of the Hopkinsian system.

1. It taught that no one is to rest till he is in harmony with, and at peace with, God. When one is taught that he is to use the means of grace and wait God's time for regeneration he may infer that waiting permits an untroubled lingering in a state of impenitence. Hopkins charges his opponents with teaching that those who use means and wait are performing their entire duty, and are, therefore, sinless, holy, without a change of heart, and are defeating the very object for which means are used. However just a conclusion this may be from the premises assumed, it would not be accepted by any calling themselves Calvinists; still Hopkinsianism probably did point out a defect in the preaching of the day.

2. Hopkinsianism taught very clearly that there is no merit in conviction of sin and self-condemnation. One who has long been thoughtless and careless in a godless life, when roused to see the sinfulness and danger of his course, is sometimes tempted to make a merit of taking the side of his accuser. He may assume a degree of righteousness in approving God's condemnation of himself. The new divinity, as it was called, insisted that this is only another form of rebellion, a new development of the pride of a wicked heart.

3. Hopkinsianism emphasized the doctrine that there is no act of an unregenerate man which is the condition of the pardon of sin. It is possible to hold that God has promised pardon to the impenitent

man who takes a certain attitude towards himself while still in impenitence; such a promise the new divinity denied. It is possible to carry the erroneous opinion still further and to maintain that the sinner has his salvation in his own hands because of his power to take at any time the attitude required. This the new divinity considered a presumptuous and dangerous error. It taught that the unrepentant man is lost already. That it is out of his power to put God under the least obligation.

On the other hand there were some unhappy influences flowing from this new divinity.

1. It gave too little prominence to the fact that Jesus Christ came to seek and save the lost. It gave too little encouragement to those who are inquiring as to the way of life. It taught men that they were to repent; that that was their first and only duty; that they could do it of themselves and ought to do it of themselves, and that nothing else was of any avail for their salvation. It taught that the use of means to effect repentance was simply deferring a duty and provoking the wrath of God. It taught that men were not to seek God's aid in reaching a state of penitence; were not to ask for clearer views of truth and the influence of the Holy Spirit, but were simply to repent. It taught that regeneration, if it ever came to them, would come as a gift that had not been promised, for which they should not look, and to seek which would be turning aside from the demands of duty. It taught that instead of thinking of themselves, the one thing incumbent on them was to love being in general.

Yet it taught, with how much consistency we need not inquire, that men must make diligent and earnest use of the means of grace, and that in no other way is it possible to enter on the regenerate life. It still maintained that one increased his guilt and became a more daring rebel by becoming familiar with the truths of the gospel, but added that this was not a matter of much account, since the amount of guilt has no connection with the pardon of sin.

2. Hopkinsianism denies the existence of a certain class of persons which all pastors find in connection with their churches. There are many individuals who are familiar with the Christian doctrine and aware of the worth of Christian institutions, who are yet in an indefinable and uncertain attitude in their Christian relations. Probably the majority of the true followers of Christ, who have been under strong evangelical influences from their childhood, do not know when they passed from the state of nature to that of grace. Of this large number many reach, without prolonged struggle, a somewhat settled assurance of their good estate; others question and linger and finally cherish a dim hope that they have passed from death to life; still others review and re-review their experiences and settle down in a state of uncertainty. Almost every church of considerable size and somewhat prolonged history, has in its membership or under its influence a class of persons of indefinable Christian standing. They give character to the Christian community, help to sustain the church, rejoice in its prosperity, yet are not very obviously representatives of Christ. What shall

we say of such persons? Many of our strong churches would have gone out of existence but for their aid in time past, and many would now be greatly weakened if their co-operation were withdrawn. The common judgment is hopeful concerning them but would not dare affirm that they are all of the household of faith. Hopkinsianism rejects the common estimate of this class of persons, and says of any of them that are unregenerate that they are worse than Sabbath-breakers and profane swearers, that they are more like wild animals caught in a net than men to be respected for their virtues and good works.

3. Hopkinsianism is not sustained in its estimate of the moral worth of men as citizens and members of the community. When carried out consistently it declares every man to be as bad as he can be,—as bad as his abilities permit. The man who indulges his self-love in relieving pain, distress and poverty is as bad as the man who indulges his self-love in theft, robbery and bloodshed. The amiable and affectionate son who finds his highest pleasure in the gratitude of a dependent widowed mother, whom he cares for not as a part of being in general, but as his own, is as guilty as the son who finds his pleasure in the revelry and mischief which cost his mother her scanty means of support. This is a theory which admits of ingenious argumentation, but it is a theory of which the practical judgment of mankind makes short work. Men believe there is a right and a wrong in the world, and are perfectly confident they know the difference between them. They know how

to come at the distinction by a much shorter process than through love of being simply considered. They believe it is lawful to do good and not lawful to do evil. The intelligence of the world accepts these distinctions, men everywhere recognize them. All the intercourse of the world presupposes them. All tragedy, all comedy is based on the assurance that the good deserves reward and iniquity is justly punished. Yet the good and the bad together, in much of social life, may fall wholly under that which the Hopkinsians designate evil, and the good, so-called, may be more decidedly an object of condemnation than the bad. Our modern years have been prolific in novels having a moral aim, much of the most valuable literature of our time has been a portrayal of the difference between a life of friendship, honesty and public spirit and a life of selfishness, greed and treachery. We must all accept the fact that a good life, as the world judges it, may not be one of true religious devotion, but it would be a bold assumption, to maintain that God knows no difference between a Jeffreys and a Hale, between a Hadrian and a Nero.

It is to be regretted that Hopkins and Hemmenway did not magnify their agreements as well as their differences. Both held to the indispensableness of the means of grace ; both held that mere attention to them does not satisfy the demands of duty. The latter held that attention to them with desire to receive the benefit coming through them may be considered a probable advance towards the divine favor, without, however, effecting a necessary connection. The Newport divine held that such atten-

tion did not at all elicit God's favorable regard; but still introduced one into the circle of those who might receive his favor. He also admitted that one avoided guilt by attendance on the means of grace while he performed no right act; his opponent held that avoiding guilt was a right act—in some respects. Hopkins' supralapsarianism goes far towards accounting for his differences with his opponents. It would have been easy to make the ground of dispute narrower than it was, and this might have had a good effect upon the opponents of Hopkinsianism at a later day.

CHAPTER V.

THE ATONEMENT.

The doctrine of the atonement has awakened much interest in New England but did not come prominently under discussion till the excitement over other theological themes had somewhat subsided. Indeed it never has been treated here with that originality of conception and constructive power of thought that are found in the debates on some other doctrines. Essays upon it have aimed rather at the avoiding of difficulties and meeting objections, than at the development of a central idea. The published writings of different theologians, after Edwards the Younger and before Dr. Bushnell, have not been discussions in which different views were presented, but attempts to present the same view in somewhat varied statements, as if each preceding treatise were correct in theory but not wholly satisfactory in form.

William Pynchon's Treatise.

There was a treatise on this subject, earlier than any referred to above, which may, perhaps, be looked

upon as prophetic of coming events, but which is now of merely historic interest. William Pynchon, a layman of Springfield, Mass., a man of mark in his day, published in 1650 a dialogue entitled (to copy from Norton) "The Meritorious Price of our Redemption, Justification," etc., which created a good deal of stir in the Colony. It was thought to teach dangerous errors, and the General Court ordered that it be burnt in the market place, and that John Norton, Teacher of the Church of Ipswich, be requested to prepare an answer to it. The heresy would not now excite so much commotion, but its more positive portions would not meet with much favor. The special motive force in the preparation of Pynchon's work, it would seem probable, was aversion to some features of the satisfaction theory as taught in his day. He could not accept the view that Christ suffered under the wrath of God and endured hell-pains. He denied that we are justified by the legal obedience of Christ, that is, by the obedience which he, as a man, rendered to the moral law. He considered this obedience necessary to Christ that he might be the spotless lamb to be offered to God, but of no avail in the atonement. He rejected imputation, whether that of our sins to Christ or that of Christ's righteousness to us. He considered the imputation of both the active and passive obedience of Christ to us absurd, since no tyrant would demand such double satisfaction for a debt. His theory was that Christ's mediatorial obedience satisfied the wrath of God against sin and procured the pardon of the elect, or effected the atonement. Christ's death was

miraculous, he died at his own volition. The Jews attempted to kill him, supposed they did kill him, Satan assailed him, inflicted, through his instruments, the bruises that were for our transgressions, according to Genesis 3:15, but all this was simply a trial of mediatorial obedience, none of these things could deprive him of life, it was by his own act that he closed his career and offered up his soul an oblation to God.

“Therefore the tree on which Christ was crucified as a malefactor, cannot be the altar, neither were the Roman soldiers the priests by whom this mediatorial sacrifice was offered up to God, but it was his own Godhead that was priest, and his own Godhead was the altar, by which he offered up his soul to God, a mediatorial sacrifice for the procuring of our redemption from the curse of the law.”¹

By atonement Pynchon meant justification and adoption. He seems to have conceived of it as at once a sentiment and an act of God the Father. It is his merciful and forgiving spirit acting itself out towards the elect. The divine wrath held sin under stern condemnation, the Mediatorial sacrifice satisfied the condemning sentiment and called forth the favor of the reconciled Sovereign.

“The justice and righteousness of a sinner doth not lie in his own righteous nature, nor in his own just actions, nor yet in the righteousness of Christ imputed, but it doth lie only in the Father’s righteous atonement, pardon and forgiveness, procured by

1. Norton’s Discussion, p. 104.

the meritorious sacrifice of atonement, and conveyed by the Father through the Mediator to every believing sinner, as soon as they are in the Mediator by faith." ¹

New England was not ready for free theological discussions in Pynchon's day, but the trend of his criticisms indicated the direction in which later theologians were to pursue their speculations. Norton's quotations have furnished the material for the above remarks. Pynchon's book is difficult of access, only three copies being known to bibliologists.

The atonement is sometimes said to be the central doctrine of theology. Since it opens the way from the world of sin to the kingdom of God, it must always have a prominent place in any scheme of Christian thought. And since its effect must be felt in every individual instance of passing from the state of nature into the regenerate life, it must be recognized as a doctrine of practical importance. Yet it is presented under manifold theories, no one of which has found general acceptance, not even acceptance sufficiently wide to give it a marked preference. There is, indeed, an agreement as to its general outlines among those known as orthodox, yet the different parties among them hold to a variety of modifications, some of which approach very nearly to a trenching upon the substance of the doctrine itself. On the whole it may be said that this doctrine is less clearly defined in its details than any other prominent doctrine of Christianity. The New England view, with which we are at present

1. *Ibid.*, p. 216.

concerned, is one of those most clearly defined and easily comprehended, but is not the most widely received; and there is not perfect agreement upon all its subordinate parts among its adherents.

Brief Statement of the Satisfaction Theory.

An accurate comprehension of the New England theory is most easily attained by noticing first the satisfaction theory. It aims at the same result as that sought by the latter, and recognizes the same means by which the process of redemption is carried on, it adopts, to a large extent, the same terms in setting forth its doctrines, and it inculcates the same entire dependence on Jesus Christ for salvation. It does not, on the other hand, give the same interpretation to all the passages of the Scriptures relating to the atonement, and it does not in all cases attribute the same design, or the same effect, to the means used.

The satisfaction theory may be thus stated. The Ruler of the Universe having established a system of government adapted to his creatures, is obliged to maintain it in its integrity and enforce it upon all its subjects. Men have made themselves transgressors of the law and have fallen under condemnation. God in his love and mercy would gladly overlook their wrong-doing and save them from the penalty they have incurred, but is unable to do so because it would degrade his government and be an admission that its precepts and penalties are unimportant, at least not indispensable.

The guilty must, therefore, suffer the penalty of

the law unless some means may be devised by which transgressors may be restored to favor. In order to rescue them from eternal woe God has formed a scheme of redemption, by which the sinner may be delivered from the punishment he deserves and the law of God still sustained in its authority. The scheme is this : Christ determines to unite the human race, or a portion of it, to himself, becomes the head and representative of his chosen ones and for them suffers death, the penalty of the law ; the race in whole or in part in this way dies and pays the penalty due to sin. Moreover Christ obeys the law, and by a sinless life earns for his own the reward that would be due to a life of holiness. The effects flowing from Christ's death and obedience are made over to those whom he represents and they become entitled to the rewards of sinlessness. The penalty of the law is remitted in the case of the redeemed by a judicial act. It is decided that the law has no claim against them. A place in heaven is also granted them by a judicial act. It is decided that Christ's obedience being imputed to them, they have a title to the rewards of obedience and the promises involved in the divine government must be fulfilled in their behalf. Christ by his death, which is called his passive obedience, satisfied the law and satisfied the divine sense of justice by paying the full penalty for sin. He also satisfied the law by a perfect obedience to its precepts and won thereby the blessings which the divine system of government confers through its legitimate operation. Hence a full salvation is secured for those united to Christ.

Objections to this Theory and Genesis of the New England Theory.

It is said that the satisfaction theory involves either the doctrine of universal salvation or that of a limited atonement. If Christ unites himself to the race as a whole, and as the head and representative suffers and obeys for all, then all must be saved. If he unites only a chosen portion to himself and suffers and dies for them, then he does not provide a salvation for the remaining portion of mankind, and it cannot be offered to them. It is also objected that the union between Christ and his followers is not such as to render his obedience and suffering theirs; that the imputation of his merits to them is an absurdity. It is said also that punishing the innocent in order to save the guilty is an injustice that cannot be attributed to God. It is said again that if Christ paid the penalty of the law by his suffering, then his obedience was not needed in the atonement, when the penalty is paid the culprit must be acquitted. And it is added that Christ could not obey for others, it was necessary that he should obey for himself that he might be a fit and spotless sacrifice to be offered for sin. It is also objected, that a salvation secured by literally paying the penalty of sin and earning the reward of heaven sets aside the grace of God. If the penalty is paid and the reward earned, then the redeemed may demand salvation as their right, and there is nothing for God to forgive; nothing for him to bestow as a favor. Again it is said that the satisfaction theory has too much affinity with the business affairs of the

world. It is akin to the repair of damages, or the payment of a debt, or the restoration of a system to working order, whereas the doctrines of salvation are addressed to the intellect of men and should be valued for their moral force, not for their energy among the causal forces of nature. It is thought that we reach a higher plane of sentiment when we remove the atonement from the sphere of legal procedure to the sphere of moral considerations; from the judicial sphere to the didactic and impressional.

It is obvious that the New England theologians long felt the force of some or all of these objections, and in their own minds modified more or less the traditional theory, yet they did not agree on any new, publicly announced scheme of doctrine. It was not till near the close of the eighteenth century that the atonement became one of the characteristic doctrines of the new theology.

Dr. Jonathan Edwards preached his three sermons, which are still considered high authority on the subject, in 1785. Dr. Stephen West published his treatise, of like import, the same year. In early times the satisfaction theory had been firmly held. Dr. Smalley quotes from Rev. Thomas Hooker, the first minister in Hartford, Conn., the following,—a supposed address of the believer to God:

“Here is the blood of Jesus which thou art well pleased with, hast accepted of, therefore, Lord, give me my due; that comfort, that peace, that wisdom, that assurance which I stand in need of.”¹

President Edwards, the elder, held to the satis-

1. Park's Collection, p. 52.

faction theory, though he indulged in speculations which served through his followers to modify that theory, and he gave his approval to Bellamy's "True Religion Delineated," in which the New England view is set forth. But among his writings is a treatise defending elaborately the doctrine of satisfaction. He maintained its reasonableness and necessity, and upheld the propriety of punishing one for the sin of another on the ground of the unity that may subsist between them. Dr. Hopkins made the atoning work of Christ consist wholly in his sufferings, not in his obedience. He held that it prepared the way for pardon, but did not remove sin. Still he held that we have one lot with Christ because of our union with him. Dr. Bellamy, in his "True Religion Delineated," published in 1750, presents the New England view in its fulness, though not at great length. He taught that the atonement removes a bar to the pardon of sin. Speaking of God's appointing and ordering the death of Christ, he says :

"In his conduct, the whole of it considered, he appears as severe against sin as if he had damned the whole world without any mixture of mercy. The infinite dignity of his Son causes those sufferings he bore in our room to be as bright a display of the divine holiness and justice, as if all the human race had for their sin been cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, and the smoke of their torments ascended forever and ever. Moreover, by all this, a way is opened for the free and honorable exercise of mercy and grace towards a sinful, guilty world. It may be done consistently with

the honor of God, of his holiness and justice, his law and government, his truth and sacred authority, for the honor of all these is effectually secured.”¹

The immediate purpose of bringing the New England view into prominence in the later years of the last century, was opposition to Universalism. This scheme was industriously propagated at that time, and found numerous adherents. Rev. John Murray, a convert under Whitefield's preaching, derived the doctrine from the satisfaction theory of the atonement. Christ tasted death for every man, therefore every man is delivered from death. This exposition had some adherents, but was not accepted by the Universalist preachers generally. The New England divines, however, deemed it necessary so to state their scheme of salvation that there should be no basis for this inference, and so to state it also, that a limited atonement should not be implied. They aimed still further to give more prominence to the grace of God in the salvation of men than was to be found, as they considered, in a justification that simply gave the sinner what was his due. They held that the atonement did not place God under the least obligation to pardon the sinner, but simply opened the way for pardon, the forgiveness of sin was still an act of sovereign mercy.

I.

THE NEW ENGLAND THEORY.

It was held that God desires the salvation of men and would gladly pardon them, if his personal feel-

1. Works I, p. 373.

ings merely were involved, but since he is a ruler, responsible for the execution of the law and the maintenance of the government, he cannot consult his personal feelings simply, but is under obligation to sustain the honor of the system under which he has placed men. The question before him, therefore, was how can men be pardoned and the law still retained in force? The New England answer was, if he could convince his subjects that his estimation of the law was not changed, that his hatred of sin was not diminished, pardon might be safely granted. God saw that this result, under certain conditions relating to the sinner, might be reached if he inflicted such suffering upon his own Son as would impress the subjects of his government with the same sense of the majesty of law and the heinousness of sin that would be produced by the punishment of the wicked. Accordingly, the Son became incarnate, suffered and died on the cross, and a way was opened for the exercise of mercy. In this way an atonement is made which consists in the sufferings and death of Christ; especially in his death. They constitute the atonement because they take the place of the punishment of the sinner. Dr. Woods, in his reply to Dr. Ware, says:

“The sufferings of Christ, as we view them, are a direct and unequalled display of the evil of sin, and the abhorrence with which God regards it. They are intended primarily for this very purpose.”¹

The younger Edwards, says :

1. p. 207.

"The atonement is the substitute for the punishment threatened in the law; and was designed to answer the same ends of supporting the authority of the law, the dignity of the divine moral government, and the consistency of the divine conduct in legislation and execution. By the atonement it appears that God is determined that the law shall be supported: that it shall not be despised or transgressed with impunity, and that it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against God."¹

Burge says:

"If God had pardoned sinners without an atonement, he would have been infinitely unjust to his kingdom. If however, anything by way of atonement could be done which would tend to deter others from disobedience, as effectually as would the execution of the penalty of the law on transgressors, God might, out of respect to this, pardon transgressors and be just to his kingdom still."²

Dr. Griffin, arguing from the Scriptural use of terms, says:

"We have, therefore, no authority to call any of Christ's influence an atonement but that which constituted the cover for sin. * * * Now to cover sin is a figurative expression, and plainly means no more than that sin is so far hid from view that it is not to be punished. Atonement, then, is merely that which is adapted to prevent punishment, or that which came in the room of punishment and laid a foundation for our discharge from every part of the curse. It reached no further, and had no bearing on our positive reward."³

Dr. Emmons says:

"The great difficulty, therefore, in the way of

1. Park's Collection, p. 8.

2. Ibid., p. 449.

3. Ibid., p. 148.

man's salvation was to reconcile God's disposition to punish with his disposition to forgive; or in other words, to reconcile his justice and his mercy. This was a difficulty in the divine character, and a still greater difficulty in the divine government. * * * How then could grace be displayed consistently with justice? This question God alone was able to solve. We know that he could be just to himself, if his justice were displayed by the sufferings of a proper substitute in the room of sinners. And as he saw that such a substitute was necessary, he appointed Christ to take the place of sinners and to suffer and die the just for the unjust."¹

These quotations are sufficient to show that the theory before us, when formulated as it was in the latter part of the 18th century, taught that the office of the atonement is to produce an effect upon the minds of intelligent moral beings, not to make compensation for failures. It teaches that Christ did not suffer the penalty of the law, but that his sufferings produce an effect equal to that which would have been produced by the full execution of the penalty on the transgressor. The law made no charge against him, consequently the idea of punishment is an absurdity, but the safety of the universe demanded an adequate exhibition of God's wrath against sin and this was amply furnished in the sufferings which Christ endured in the sinner's place. The claim that Christ suffered the penalty due to the elect, being one with them, they with him constituting one mystical person, is rejected as a device of mysticism which has never received much favor from ordinary American Puritanism, especially in its later phases.

1. Park's Collection, p. 116.

This theory teaches that Christ's sufferings—the atonement which he made—do not satisfy distributive justice; that form of justice which demands an exact penalty for each specific sin. It holds that the saints in heaven are still subject to the claims of a broken law and that God might at any moment drive any one of them or all of them from his presence, and, without the least injustice, sentence them to eternal punishment. Thus stands and ever will stand the account of distributive justice with Peter and Paul, with every saint Catholic or Protestant. The theory holds, however, that general justice is fully satisfied by the death of Christ. By general justice is meant regard for the public good. When the interests of the universe are maintained, sin is made to appear sinful, righteousness is rewarded, deterrents from wrong-doing are applied in their fullest force, and encouragements to right-doing are proclaimed and made practical, then it is supposed that all is done which can be done for the good of the universe, or, in other words, general justice is fully maintained; distributive justice is indeed passed over unsatisfied, but public justice can ask no more than it receives.

This theory of the atonement does not teach that the sufferings of Christ were as great as those of the redeemed would have been, had the penalty been executed upon them, but that they were great enough to produce the effect upon intelligent beings which would have been produced by the actual infliction of the full penalty in the natural course of events.

There are those who hold that Christ, because of the infinity of his nature, suffered more than the

entire race could suffer in eternal perdition, but the New England view rejects this and maintains that the dignity of the divine person is to be taken into consideration in estimating the effect of his humiliation and death, and that not merely physical pain, but mental anguish, sorrow and grief are to be taken into the account.

It is further maintained that it is not the sum of suffering but the public effect of it which is to be the standard of judgment. The punishment of the wicked, while it manifests the wrath of God, does not produce so definite an effect as is produced by the death of Christ. No one knows precisely the estimate which God puts upon the eternal punishment of the sinner, but the infliction of pain upon his Son is susceptible of a clearer interpretation, and is overwhelmingly impressive even if the severity be not the utmost possible. Burge says :

“It is plain that their misery, (the misery of sinning men) which would have resulted from the execution of the law, would have been an evil in his view, (the view of God) great in proportion to the strength of his benevolence. Of course this evil must appear to other beings, great in proportion to their apprehension of the strength of his benevolence. But the strength of God’s benevolence towards sinners never could have been manifested to the degree in which it now appears, if the penalty of the law had been executed. For it is only in the sufferings of Christ for sinners that divine love appears in its glorious fulness.”

From these considerations Burge infers :

“It is not necessary that the sufferings of Christ

should be, in themselves considered, so great an evil in the view of God, as the misery of all mankind would have been. It is sufficient if God show as much respect to his law, by the sufferings of Christ, as he would have done by the execution of the penalty on mankind.”¹

Thus the sufferings of Christ having greater power of manifestation than those of men may be proportionately less in amount.

The New England theory has sometimes been called the Benevolence theory, but the term does not describe it with accuracy. It is not included in the human idea of benevolence, nor has it more affinity with that idea than other theories, unless it should be claimed that benevolence and general justice are equivalent terms. It has also been called the Governmental theory. This is perhaps its best designation, since it aims more definitely than other systems to show that the honor of the divine government is preserved, while sin is pardoned. It has sometimes been entitled the Spectacular theory, because it is a demonstration before the Universe, of God's hatred of sin. But this is a term adopted by its opponents,—and partially in ridicule. There is superficial fitness in the word spectacular, but it does not give any clue to the content and substance of the theory. It has sometimes been identified with the Grotian theory, but this affords no help in ascertaining its true character. “Grotian” needs exposition more than the theory sought to be illustrated by it. Grotius' treatise is a defense of the doctrine

1. Park's Collection, pp. 460, 461.

of satisfaction against Socinus and has too much of the polemic in it to admit of the direct advocacy of a positive, formal theory. Still his thoughts often coincide closely with New England views.

Estimate of the New England Theory.

The New England view of the atonement has not commended itself very generally to theologians, although it has been received with some favor in England, as well as in this country. It is not necessary to resort to it to avoid the doctrine of universal salvation, or to avoid the doctrine of a limited atonement, or to be able to ascribe the salvation of man to the grace of God. If Christ, by his incarnation simply, is the head of the race, in such a sense that every man is a part of his body and suffers with him, then universal salvation is a natural inference, but men do not become members of Christ's body by mere natural birth into the human family, it is by faith in Jesus Christ; salvation is therefore limited to those who believe. Rev. John Murray and Rev. Joseph Huntington, D. D., pastor in Coventry, Conn., as may be seen from his posthumous work, *Calvinism Improved*, argued in favor of universal salvation on metaphysical grounds and from Scripture statements, but Calvinists do not admit that they have presented fully the satisfaction view of the atonement. And a general atonement, that is, an atonement sufficient for all, is consistent with other theories. The Synod of Dort, as is well known, held that all who are addressed by the preaching of the Gospel, are earnestly invited to partake of Sal-

vation. Professor A. A. Hodge, of Princeton, gives the American Presbyterian view of this topic in these words:

“A *bona fide* offer of the gospel, therefore, is to be made to all men,—(1) because the satisfaction rendered to the law is sufficient for all men, (2) because it is exactly adapted to the redemption of all, (3) because God designs that whosoever exercises faith in Christ shall be saved by him. Thus the atonement makes the salvation of every man objectively possible. * * * No man is lost for the want of an atonement or because there is any other barrier in the way of his salvation than his own most free and wicked will.”¹

Neither is the New England Theology a special exhibition of the grace of God. It has been sometimes supposed that forgiveness by a sovereign act is a more conspicuous exhibition of mercy than forgiveness purchased by the blood of Christ. But grace does not begin where the atonement leaves off, the entire scheme of salvation is a scheme of grace. It is manifested through the atonement. Grace is a system carried into effect by the divine powers, it combines into a unity the process of redemption, and is not adequately represented by the separate and individual acts by which each believer is pardoned.

Again, there is something incongruous in the thought that the atonement is made for holy, not sinful beings. We connect with it the ideas of sacrifice, expiation, propitiation. We have the feeling that it is guilt which demands atonement, and

that the demand is the more obviously just because the guilt of men is great. We are accustomed to think of sin and the atonement as opposing forces, that Christ came into the world to destroy the works of the devil. Sin is a system, has a nature, continues its existence by a development of its forces, and we attribute to the scheme of grace a resisting and overcoming energy when it comes in collision with sin; it furnishes a basis for the pardon of past sin and the repression of its power in the future. The governmental theory makes the atonement simply a guard against the dangers befalling innocent beings from the pardon of sin. Those who are now living lives of holiness may, it is said, if they see sin freely pardoned, look upon it as a small evil, and themselves yield to its temptations. God therefore, for their sake, makes an impressive demonstration of its odiousness in his sight, and then pardons sin of his mere sovereign mercy. The atonement has no reference to past sins, is merely a guard against possible future sins. Such a scheme makes the Father the Saviour of sinners and Christ the Saviour of the Father's reputation. Christ does no doubt fulfill this latter office, but, it is generally held, by fulfilling the former also. The inquiry might here be raised, moreover, whether there is sufficient evidence that holy beings will ever tire of their holiness and have such longings for a life of sin as to furnish basis for a theory of atonement.

It may be further remarked that this governmental theory is not developed from any central idea,

does not represent anything belonging positively to the process of renewing man's nature, and is not specially favored by Scriptural expressions. It has the appearance of being made up of the fragments of an older and a larger scheme. The satisfaction theory consists of two parts,—the effect of Christ's death, and the effect of his obedience. It teaches that by his sufferings and death he satisfied the law of God, taking upon himself the punishment of our sins. He became our substitute and died a sacrifice in our behalf. On this ground our sins are forgiven. The New England theory presents the same result as being the effect of the atonement, and in terms borrowed from the scheme of satisfaction, but it explains the terms as figurative. It says: "Christ was not our substitute before the law, but the result is as if he had been; he did not receive punishment, but the result is as if he had received it; he did not make a compensation for our sins, but the result is as if he had made it, for he removed an obstacle to our pardon." Dr. Bushnell, in criticising this theory, remarks that its advocates in arguing in its favor, imply and rest upon the old doctrine of substitution and punishment. This same almost covert adherence to the old doctrine appears in the unsettled views among New England theologians concerning the legitimate effect of the atonement and the office to be accorded to Christ's obedience. A few citations will illustrate their differences. Emmons says:

"Forgiveness is the only favor which God bestows upon men, upon Christ's account."¹

Burge says:

"If the view which has been given of the necessity of atonement, in order to the pardon of sinners be correct, it appears evident that they may be admitted to heaven, as well as pardoned on account of the sufferings of Christ."²

Smalley says:

"Christ is the end of the law to every one that believeth, as believers, and they only, are delivered from the curse and entitled to eternal life, through his atonement and righteousness."³

Maxcy says:

"The obedience of Christ, therefore, as it virtually condemned sin, and expressed his approbation of the law, so as to establish its authority as a rule of righteousness, appears to constitute an essential, though not the principal part of the atonement."⁴

Dr. Griffin made an elaborate attempt to unite all parties in their views upon this subject. He called the blood of Christ the lower ransom by which sinners may be delivered from death, and the blood and merit of Christ a higher ransom by which a title to eternal life is given.⁵

Thus the New England theory does not seem to be a complete and well-rounded scheme. It does not unite devout and earnest Christians, nor does it

1. Works V, pp. 44, 57.

2. Park's Collection, p. 509.

3. Ibid., p. 75.

4. Ibid., p. 100.

5. Ibid., p. 144.

unite cautious, philosophical thinkers either on the matter or the result of the atonement. It has, however, been earnestly maintained by many New England men, and has been affirmed to be of all schemes the most Scriptural and the one most in accord with common sense. This may be said to be the position which was accorded to it by those in the Hopkinsonian succession until it fell under the criticism of Rev. Dr. Horace Bushnell, of Hartford.

His speculations belong to a later date than those which we have been considering, followed after, and were perhaps in part suggested by the New Haven discussions to which we are to give attention, but they stand so wholly by themselves, that we may introduce them here by anticipation and connect them with the theme to which they are closely allied.

II.

THE MORAL INFLUENCE THEORY OF THE ATONEMENT.

Dr. Bushnell's treatment of this subject made so deep an impression, that the theory he advocated is often designated by his name, both in this country and in Great Britain. It is, however, more properly named the Moral Theory or the Moral Influence Theory. He considered the atonement not the removal of a bar simply, but an efficient reconciling force. He thought the New England Theory, therefore, mechanical and weak. He could not see how the expression of God's disapprobation of sin through the sufferings of Christ prepared the way for the

pardon of the transgressor. He denied that the death of Christ, expressed an abhorrence of sin, and affirmed that, if it did, the abhorrence would be of no avail towards pardon. He says:

“To put forward an expression, therefore, of God’s abhorrence to sin, as a substitute for justice, is to give it the weakest possible substitute. If the abhorrence could be shown keeping company with justice, and justice with it, there would be no deficiency, but to make a governmental sanction out of abhorrence itself, and publish a free forgiveness to sin, on the ground of it, is to make forgiveness safe by a much less positive and weaker way of handling, than forgiveness itself. All doubt on this point ought to be forever ended, by simply asking what kind of figure, as regards efficiency, any government of the world would make, dropping off its punishments and substituting abhorrences.”¹

He held that the advocates of the theory themselves unconsciously fortify their theory by outside aids.

“It will be found accordingly, if the language of those who take up this abhorrence theory is carefully watched, that they have a latent reference back always to Christ, as being in some penal condition, without which our sin is no way concerned with his suffering, or his suffering with it.”²

Dr. Bushnell is equally decisive in his rejection of the satisfaction theory as a scheme in which the terms are petrified and made to serve for things. He never wearies of ridiculing the idea that the in-

1. *Vicarious Sacrifice*, I, pp. 367, 368.

2. *Ibid.*, I, p. 369.

nocent can take the place of the guilty before the law and acquire a superfluous merit which can be imputed to those whose place he takes. Still, there are certain affinities between each of these theories and his own. He believes that Christ maintained the law in honor, and in a certain sense he teaches the doctrine of imputed righteousness. He speaks of Christ's obedience unto death as "covering the law thus with its original honor and breathing God's everlasting love into our fallen desecrated nature."¹

The view which he set up in opposition to these theories, though not a development of either, is worthy of a brief notice as finding much favor in New England, and displacing to some extent its peculiar theory. He spent much time in settling his views on this question, and his speculations must for this reason, be of interest in his own State and the neighboring States. In the year 1848, he addressed the Divinity School, in Harvard University, on this subject. He says in the introduction of the address that this theme was chosen because he had just emerged from a state of protracted suspense, or mental conflict, in reference to it. In 1866, he published an elaborate work on *Vicarious Sacrifice*. Eight years later, moved "by the unexpected arrival of fresh light," he published his *Forgiveness and Law*, as a supplement, in part a modification of the former work. These two volumes are now published under the title of the former. The second volume does not differ essentially from the preceding one, except that it emphasizes the self-propitiation of God by his vicarious sacrifice in in-

1. *Vicarious Sacrifice*, I, p. 320.

curing suffering for the sinner's sake. The result of this twenty-five years' study was the moral theory of the atonement. Only the salient features of it will be noticed. He makes atonement a change in us, "a change by which we are reconciled to God. Propitiation is an objective conception, by which that change, taking place in us, is spoken of as occurring representatively in God."¹

The modified view on the latter point removes the representative idea, and makes the propitiation an eternal fact.

"The transactional matter of Christ's life and death is a specimen chapter, so to speak, of the infinite book that records the eternal going on of God's blessed nature within. Being made in his image, we are able to see his moral dispositions, always forging their forgivenesses, under the reactions of endurance and sacrifice, as we do ours. And this is the eternal story of which Christ shows us but a single leaf."²

He makes justification a moral act by which the character is renewed. He includes in it regeneration but not sanctification. The old theology makes justification a forensic act, not changing the character of the justified one but merely his standing before the law, he is acquitted, not made personally righteous. Dr. Bushnell considered this an absurd and a demoralizing doctrine. He argues very earnestly that the word justify, as used in the Scriptures, never means to pronounce just or treat as just, but always means to make just, to rectify in moral character.

1. Vicarious Sacrifice, I, p. 523.

2. Ibid., II, p. 60.

"In Christian justification there is no reference of thought whatever to the satisfaction of God's retributive justice, or to any acquittal passed on guilty men, because the score of their account with God's justice has been made even by the sufferings of Christ. The justification spoken of is a moral affair, related only to faith in the subject, and the righteousness of God, operative in or through his faith." ¹

The key to Bushnell's scheme is faith. He agrees with other theologians as to the nature of faith but attributes to it a different relation to justification. He makes it not merely a necessary condition of justification but the medium through which the divine forces effect justification. He says :

"The real faith is this, * * * the trusting of one's self over, sinner to Saviour, to be in him, and of him, and new characterized by him; because it is only in this way that the power of Christ gets opportunity to work. So the sinner is justified, and the justification is a most vital affair; 'the justification of life.' The true account of it is, that Jesus, coming into the world, with all God's righteousness upon him, declaring it to guilty souls in all the manifold evidences of his life and passion, wins their faith, and by that faith they are connected again with the life of God, and filled and overspread with his righteousness." ²

The connection of the human soul with the life of God through faith is, with Bushnell, the essential element of salvation. This union with God is effected by divine power, for no man is able "to cast off sin and renew himself," yet is effected by

1. Vicarious Sacrifice, I, p. 415.

2. Ibid., I, p. 435.

moral or persuasive forces wielded by the incarnate Saviour. Describing the beginning of the new life, he says :

“What they (Christians) so much feel and have coming in upon their moral sensibility, in ways so piercing, is the law of duty, glorified by suffering and the visibly divine sacrifice of the cross.”¹

The theory of Dr. Bushnell, like the satisfaction theory, and unlike the New England theory, represents the atonement as a power meeting and grappling with sin and, on the sinner's compliance with certain conditions, overcoming it. On the other hand, like the New England theory and unlike the satisfaction theory, it represents the atonement as effective in the realm of moral considerations and through motives addressed to the intellect not in the realm of forensic processes and judicial decisions. He speaks of his theory as the moral theory, and is aware that theories so characterized have long been known, yet considers his different from those earlier presented, which have been deservedly rejected. They have taught that Christ was an example simply, or that he came to remove prejudice against God, or that his mission was to restore a sound morality to the world, while he retains the law in its full force and accepts the doctrines of divine wrath, judicial condemnation and eternal punishment. Of other moral theories he says :

“The inherent weakness of all such versions of the gospel is, that they look to see it operate by mere benignities,—something is either to be shown or

1. Vicarious Sacrifice, I. p. 302.

done, that is good enough to win the world. The one fatal defect that vitiates all such conceptions and puts them under a doom of failure, is that they make up gospel which has no law side of authority, penal enforcement, rectoral justice; nothing to take hold of an evil mind at the point of its indifference or aversion to good, nothing to impress conviction, or shake the confidence, or stop the boldness of transgression.”¹

Bushnell from the first connected the severe and the tragic with our salvation through Christ. In his address at Cambridge in 1848, he says:

“We see him (Christ) in fact, descending below our malignity, that it may break itself across his Divine Patience. He outreaches, by his love, the measure of our animosities—the wrong will in us, all the malignities of our devilish passion feel themselves outdone. Evil falls back from its apparent victory, spent, exhausted, conscious, as it never was before, of its impotence.”²

This result follows from Christ’s method of meeting the malign spirit that bursts forth in a storm of deadly violence against his person, and from his patience in bearing the concentrated venom of his crucifiers.

This theory of Bushnell has been forcibly criticised by Dr. Dale in his treatise on the atonement, and by Dr. S. D. Cochrane in his work on Moral Government and the Atonement. His exposition of the term justification, as used in the Scriptures, receives little favor from commentators and is entirely rejected by some of the latest.³

1. Vicarious Sacrifice, I, p. 399.

2. God in Christ, p. 242.

3. See Sanday on Romans, p. 28.

CHAPTER VI.

LATER DISCUSSIONS—NEW HAVEN THEOLOGY.

New England Theology did not take into its embrace any new doctrines after Dr. Edwards, in 1785, made his clear and permanently adopted statements concerning the atonement. The theologizing tendency of the New England mind, however, by no means ceased at that time; on the contrary some of the warmest discussions were subsequent to that date, but the aim was either to defend the traditional theology or to give more discriminating expression to doctrines already under discussion. Unitarianism, New Haven theology and the publications of Dr. Bushnell, will at once suggest themselves in this connection. What has within the last few years been known as the new theology is not sufficiently developed to be assigned its exact place in religious history. Dr. Bushnell's various essays and treatises related to a large number of theological topics, but have not awakened permanent interest except upon the atonement. His views on this theme have, by anticipation, been already spoken of. The Unitarian movement was originally directed against the evangelical system as a whole, though the Trinity was made the prominent

topic of dispute. The orthodox contention at this point was simply a defence of the traditional faith, with the exception, perhaps, of the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son. This discussion led, however, incidentally to a review, at a later date, of some points of Hopkinsianism and may be briefly noticed.

The tendencies to liberalism appeared early in the 18th century, perhaps late in the 17th, and were fostered by the writings of Whiston, Taylor and other English authors whose names have already been given. The contrast between the liberals and conservatives was more clearly brought to view by the Great Awakening of 1740. After much uncertainty as to the attitude of different churches and different men, an irreconcilable conflict was recognized in the election of Rev. Henry Ware, as Hollis Professor of Divinity in Harvard College, in 1805. The loss of this institution to the conservatives, now known as the Orthodox, led to the founding of Andover Theological Seminary, in 1808. The increasing diversity of sentiment between the parties, found an emphatic expression in a sermon of Dr. Channing, preached at Baltimore, in 1819, at the ordination of Jared Sparks. This sermon called out a reply from Professor Stuart of Andover Seminary, and later a series of letters from Dr. Woods, of the same institution, addressed to Unitarians. To these letters, Dr. Ware of Harvard, replied in a series of letters to Trinitarians and Calvinists. A reply from Dr. Woods, called out an answer from Dr. Ware, in response to which Dr. Woods, published his third reply as "Remarks on

Dr. Ware's Answer." This discussion between Woods and Ware, took a broad range, but the question of depravity was made prominent, especially native depravity and its relation to the justice of God. Through these publications New England was made still the arena of theological debate and Hopkinsianism was kept prominently before the minds of the people. Some of the positions taken by Dr. Woods were not fully accepted in certain quarters by the Orthodox, and it was vaguely reported that in some respects, preference was given to Dr. Ware. Three or four years elapsed, however, after the close of this discussion, before the rise of any new theological agitation. After this brief rest came the most prolonged of the New England controversies. Before noticing the items of the discussion, it will be of interest to advert briefly to two of the disputants who were specially prominent, not only in the debate, but in New England ecclesiasticism in general.

Leonard Woods was born in Princeton, Mass., June 19, 1774, and died at Andover in 1854. He was for several years the most conspicuous theologian, among the orthodox, in New England. He was graduated at Harvard College in 1796. After a few months' teaching and several months' study of theology, he was licensed to preach in 1798. In November of that year he was settled as pastor at Newbury, Mass. He at once assumed a prominent position among the ministers of the State. His counsel and assistance were sought by leading theologians; he became the associate and friend of the most prominent citizens of the region in which he

lived. He seems to have had remarkable facility in acquiring and retaining the esteem and confidence of persons of culture and sound judgment. In 1808 he was appointed Professor of Christian Theology at Andover. His labors in his professorship met with cordial and enthusiastic acceptance for many years. He resigned his office in 1846. His mind was acute and comprehensive. He was considered an adroit controversialist. His movements in conducting a discussion were deliberate and methodical, his treatment of a theme prolix, but he never lost sight of his main object; never was diverted from his course by any irritation or annoyances. His chief characteristics were an absolute reliance on the Scriptures as final authority, an absence of all ambition to go beyond the bounds of legitimate knowledge in his speculations, a cautious, steady and sure-footed pursuit of the object in view. He was a Hopkinsonian, but irenic in temper and appreciative of Old School Theology.

Nathaniel W. Taylor, D. D., was born in New Milford, Conn., June 23, 1786, was graduated at Yale College in 1807, became pastor of the First Congregational Church in New Haven in 1811, was appointed Professor of Didactic Theology in Yale College in 1822 and remained in that office till his death in 1858. He was the chief advocate and defender of the New Haven Theology,—often called Taylorism,—though he had able coadjutors in Rev. Chauncey A. Goodrich, D. D., (born 1790, died 1860) and Rev. Eleazar T. Fitch, (born 1791, died 1871.)

As a speculative theologian he stands in decided contrast to Dr. Woods. The bent of his mind was strongly towards metaphysical investigation. He loved to explore the mysteries of theology and philosophy, and sought to enlarge the area of clear and definite knowledge. He suggested modifications of the current doctrines of depravity, of responsibility, of the divine permission of sin, and of regeneration. His speculations concerning the Trinity and justification are instructive but are not presented in a systematic form. He did not in his writings keep his readers steadily in mind as Dr. Woods did, but allowed himself to be diverted from the main line of his argument by glimpses of accessory truths. Hence it was difficult to comprehend and analyze his arguments. He often complained of being misunderstood and misrepresented. He once said before his class, that no one would understand him till his book was published, and that that would be so large that no one would read it. Though he adopted, perhaps originated, certain sententious phrases, such as 'certainty with power to the contrary,' 'he can if he will, and he can if he won't,' yet the working of his mind was ever to larger and broader expansions of view without closing up his lines of thought to meet at a definite and appointed goal; his great work on Moral Government unfolds like an apocalypse and it is difficult to find the conclusion; his lectures on Revealed Theology, though prolonged in some instances, are at once complex and fragmentary. It is sometimes amusing to follow out his deductions from what he considers the erro-

neous views of his opponents by which he makes them logically Pelagians, Arminians, Antinomians, Infidels, Atheists, etc. As would be inferred from such characteristics, he was one of the most stimulating teachers of his day, but his followers never formed a compact sect or party. It would be difficult to gather an ethical school around such a nucleus as the following: (President Porter's Exposition of Dr. Taylor's Estimate of Virtue.)

"Dr. Taylor would say that ideal good, conformity to which constitutes moral goodness, can only be known by the highest subjective satisfaction that comes when the soul fastens on the best objects by which the universe can occupy its energies."¹

It is not necessary to take up all the points in dispute during the debate over the New Haven theology. Its main features can be presented by themselves, and more briefly than a historical narrative would permit. A brief glance at some of the more prominent points in the discussion will, however, be of value and will exhibit the earnestness and determination of the parties. In 1826 Rev. E. T. Fitch, D. D., Professor of Divinity in Yale College, preached two sermons which were published, in which he maintained that sin is the act of a moral agent, a violation of a known rule of duty, and that no sin of Adam is reckoned to his posterity. The term *act* was used as including permanent states of the will, purposes of the heart.²

1. See article in *New Englander*, Vol. XVIII.

2. See *Catastrophe*, by Crocker, pp. 116-118.

In 1827 *The Christian Advocate*, edited by Dr. Green, published in Philadelphia, contained a criticism, supposed by some to be from Dr. Alexander, on these sermons. In this it was maintained that the nature of the soul,—its state, or temper, or disposition is sinful before any voluntary act is put forth. Dr. Fitch replied to this criticism and restated his views. In 1828 Dr. N. W. Taylor preached the *Concio ad Clerum* at New Haven, in which he maintained that all men, unless grace intervene, commit sin in their first and every other moral act; that sin is the preference of the world and worldly good to the will and glory of God; that the propensity leading to sin is not sinful, but that sin is to be traced to the nature of man, not to his circumstances. He insisted, however, that a corrupt nature does not imply physical or constitutional corruption. He appended to the sermon the remark that the two following positions are groundless assumptions, viz: Sin is the necessary means of the greatest good, and, God can prevent all sin, at least the present degree of sin, in a moral system. Rev. Joseph Harvey, of Westchester, Conn., criticised this sermon adversely, maintaining that native depravity, the cause of actual sin, is sinful. In 1829 Dr. Porter and Professor Goodrich reviewed the sermon and the criticism. To this Mr. Harvey replied, and Dr. Taylor wrote a pamphlet answering the reply. The same year, 1829, Dr. Taylor wrote a series of articles in review of, rather suggested by, a work on "The Means of Regeneration," by Rev. Gardiner Spring, D.D. Dr. Taylor maintained that sinners

may, and at times do, use the means of grace effectively and not sinfully. Dr. Bennet Tyler, then of Portland, Me., published "Strictures" on these articles, subjecting them to a thorough review. In 1830 Dr. Taylor replied to these strictures. The same year Dr. Woods, of Andover, published "Letters to the Professor of Didactic Theology in Yale College," combating the position of Dr. Taylor that these are groundless assumptions, viz: that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good, and that God can prevent sin in a moral system. Dr. Taylor replied to Dr. Woods in a long appendix to an article on Dr. Bellamy's theology, published in the *Christian Spectator*. In form this article appears as from a friend of Dr. Taylor. In 1832 Dr. Hawes, of Hartford, wrote a letter to Dr. Taylor asking him to publish a statement of his theological views. Dr. Taylor complied with this request.

Dr. Tyler published in the *Spirit of the Pilgrims*—a Calvinistic periodical of Boston, 1828-1833,—an examination of these views, agreeing with much but dissenting at certain points, in an article of eleven pages. Dr. Taylor replied in an article of twenty-three pages. Dr. Tyler, replied in article of fifteen pages, followed by another of nineteen pages. Dr. Taylor replied in December, in an article of twenty-six pages, followed in January, 1833, by another of fourteen pages, and in February, by still another of twenty pages. The *Spirit of the Pilgrims* declined to publish further on the subject, except that it admitted a letter to the editor from Dr. Tyler, of twenty-two pages, for the sake of correcting certain

misrepresentations. To this letter, Dr. Taylor replied, in a letter to the editor of the *Christian Spectator*. In 1835, Dr. Woods published his prize essay on Total Depravity, which contained slight indirect references to the New Haven Theology. In 1837, Dr. Tyler wrote a series of eighteen letters to Dr. John Witherspoon, of South Carolina, which were published under the title, "Letters on the Origin and Progress of Arminian views in New England, from a distinguished New England minister to one in the South." These letters were extensively published in the Presbyterian papers in the Southern States. They delineate the progress of the controversy and bring out its main features. The vigorous criticisms of Dr. Taylor from Presbyterian sources do not require notice here.

There are two positions relating to moral action, which had to Dr. Taylor's mind, the force of axiomatic truths, which we should have in mind in making a study of his peculiar theology. He attributed an important place to self-love in the formation of character, and he considered a choice between opposing interests the only act having moral quality. By means of the first,—self-love,—he considered that men can by an act without moral quality, enter on a course of life that will entirely change their personal character. With him, every holy act was an act prompted by supreme benevolence, every sinful act, one prompted by the principle of selfishness. But he believed there might be occasions when neither of these great principles were operative, when from sudden impulse or a shock of surprise one should be

prompted to act out of his mere humanity and obey the first suggestions of reason and common sense. An act of this kind is not developed from one's character, but is in obedience to reason or the native sensibilities. Such an act, being neither selfish nor benevolent, is without moral quality, but opens the way to moral conduct, possibly to an entire change of moral character, and lies at the foundation of all deeds known as right or wrong.

The second point, that a choice having moral quality, is an elective preference, he insisted upon with great earnestness. It was one of the grounds on which he was charged with Arminianism.

Edwards made choice the settled desire, the fixed and pronounced pleasure of the man. His son considered this one of his father's great merits, that he had shown choice to be spontaneous. He put the moral quality of an act, accordingly, in its nature, not in the cause which called it into existence. The Hopkinsians also put the moral quality of an act in its nature, not in its cause, though they gave greater emphasis to the active nature of sin. Dr. Taylor made the moral quality of an act depend not only upon the nature, that is, the qualities of the act, but also upon its being an elective preference with full power to prefer the contrary. He made a distinction between constitutional preferences and elective preferences. The former are equivalent to the taste or relish, the latter are choices in which there is an alternative which is positively rejected. He, however, included among voluntary acts, permanent states of the soul, which had their beginning in an elective

preference. A worldly life he considered a permanent elective preference of the world to God. This he sometimes called the selfish principle. Still these permanent states did not constitute the choice in specific instances. When a settled preference of liking or disliking was fixed, the choice still remained to be made, and might be in either direction. It was because of this view that he was charged with Arminianism and Pelagianism. Professor Fisher of New Haven admits that this is the Pelagian view of the will, but still maintains that Dr. Taylor, was a Calvinist, because he held to the certainty of choices, that is, that they would always be in accord with one's pleasure or disposition, notwithstanding the power to the contrary. His phrase was 'certainty with power to the contrary.' And he laid much stress on the fact of power, however it might be exercised. He says:

"The mere fact that that which gives us pleasure or pain is *ours*, and more especially that it is *ours* by *production* or authorship, is a source of high, distinct and peculiar pleasure or pain."¹

The points at issue between the New Haven theologians and their opponents were few, except as inferences and supposed consequences were charged by each party upon the other. The main topics were depravity and the divine permission of sin. The position which Dr. Taylor and his associates took, was this: *Sin is not a propagated, essential property of the human soul, and sin is not the necessary*

1. Moral Government, I, p. 38.

means of the greatest good, or, God does not decree the existence of sin because it is necessary to the perfection of the moral system. Dr. Taylor said:

“These two theories embrace almost absolutely every topic in what has been called the New Haven controversy.”¹

We shall have more clearly in mind the topics that came under debate in this controversy, if we make them four instead of two; (1) Human sin does not include any inherited disposition. (2) Sin is not the necessary means of the greatest good, at least it has not been proved to be. (3) Can God prevent all sin in a moral system? (4) Regeneration is the choice of the service of God as the highest good from the motive of self-love on the occasion of the suspension of the selfish principle by the Holy Spirit. On the first point he agreed with the Hopkinsians, against the Old Calvinists. The fifteen errors, which he notes, involved in the doctrine of inherited sin, may be found set forth in the *Christian Spectator*, for 1832, pp., 456-464. The topic has been sufficiently noticed under the New England doctrine of sin. The other three points are anti-Hopkinsian.

Dr. Taylor states his view of depravity and sin in his letter to Dr. Hawes:

“I believe that all mankind, in consequence of the fall of Adam, are born destitute of holiness, and are by nature totally depraved; in other words, that all men from the commencement of moral agency do,

1. *Christian Spectator*, 1832, p. 492, and 1833, p. 657.

without the interposition of divine grace, sin, and only sin, in all their moral conduct.” . . . “I do not believe that the nature of the human mind, which God creates, is itself sinful, or that sin pertains to anything in the mind which precedes all conscious mental exercise or action, and which is neither a matter of consciousness nor knowledge. But I do believe that sin universally is no other than selfishness, or a preference of one’s self to all others—of some inferior good to God; that this voluntary preference is a permanent principle of action in all the unconverted; and that this is sin, and all that in the Scripture is meant by sin.”¹

He thus makes sin the choice of a less good, not the choice of a wrong as such. He also makes depravity a consequence of the fall of Adam, but makes no attempt to explain the connection between the two.

The second and third points, whether sin is the necessary means of the greatest good, and whether God can prevent sin in a moral system, were associated in the discussion. Dr. Taylor in his replies, and in defending himself against his assailants, stated his position to be: these propositions are groundless assumptions. Those who maintain them make positive assertions and must prove them to be true. The burden of proof rests on them. But in the discussion he goes quite beyond this negative position and vehemently opposes the propositions in question. In the note to the *Concio ad Clerum* he does this in the interrogative form, but in a way to leave no doubt as to his view. The almost defiant form of

1. *Christian Spectator*, 1832, pp. 171-173.

his questions and the marked disparagement of the propositions themselves clearly indicate his position. Dr. Woods, in his second letter, says:

“Now from all you have advanced on the subject, I conclude that you mean to hold the *opposite positions*, namely, that sin is not the necessary means of the greatest good, and as such, so far as it exists, is *not on the whole* preferable to holiness in its stead; and that in a moral system, God could *not* have prevented all sin, nor the present degree of it.”¹

Dr. Taylor's view of sin as a means of good may be summed up in this way: he denied that God prefers sin to holiness under any circumstances, affirmed that God always prefers obedience to disobedience, that sin is never a good under any circumstances, that it could not be totally evil if it were the necessary means of the greatest good, that we could not maintain the sincerity of God's promises and commands if he anywhere preferred sin to holiness, and that we could justly object to his government if sin were a necessary element in it. These statements may be justified from the note to the *Concio* and from many expressions in his published writings, especially from his elaborate argument in the *Christian Spectator* of 1832, pages 465 to 493. He is less aggressive in opposing the doctrine that God can prevent all sin in a moral system, but says, this has never been proved and it may be that sin is incidental to such a system. Sin must be possible if the system is a moral one, and if a man can sin he may sin, therefore it may be true that God can-

1. Wood's Works, IV, p. 360.

not prevent all sin in a moral system. This does not imply a limitation of God's power, for the impossibility may rise from the nature of things, as it is impossible that a whole should be greater than the sum of its parts.

"Does the supposition that God could not prevent sin in a moral system, limit his power at all? To suppose or affirm that God cannot perform what is impossible in the nature of things, is not properly to limit his power. Is there then, the least particle of evidence that the entire prevention of sin in moral beings is possible to God in the nature of things? If not, then what becomes of the very common assumption of such a possibility?"

... "Is there any evidence from facts? Facts, so far as they are known to us, furnish no support to the assumption, that God could in a moral system prevent all sin, or even the present degree of sin. For we know of no creature of God, whose holiness is secured without the influence which results either directly or indirectly, from the existence of sin and its punishment. How then, can it be shown from facts, that God could secure any of his moral creatures in holiness without this influence? * * * If God could prevent all sin without this influence why has he not done it?"¹

The New Haven theologians intended to retain the advantage of a negative position as to the divine prevention of sin; they said their opponents must prove that God can prevent it. Still they did not always confine themselves strictly to their chosen ground.

The following from the *Christian Spectator* of 1831 is one of their most cautious statements:

1. Note to the *Concio*, 11 and 13.

"We have never said that any reason for the existence of sin can be proved by man to be the true reason. The most we have ventured to say is, that if we suppose it *possible*,—not certain or established as true, that sin is an evil incidental (in respect to the divine prevention) to the best system of moral influence, the subject would be exempt from difficulties and objections. * * * But have we, in saying this, affirmed that sin *is* thus incidental? Nothing like it. We have simply placed the burden of proving the contrary upon the objector."¹

But in the same periodical for 1832, in an article attributed to Professor Fitch, we find, of three possible answers, (as is asserted) to the question how good comes through evil, this is preferred: *Evils arise from the nature of a moral universe and are regulated for the best results.* This is affirmed to be possible and probable. The probabilities in favor of the position are said to be:

(1) "Causes here originating sin must be present in any possible universe of moral beings", (2) "Sin in the present universe has originated from such causes in kind as are inseparable from the existence of moral agents, notwithstanding God has put forth no act for the sake of leading his subjects into sin rather than holiness", (3) "Sin in the present universe has originated from such causes in kind as are inseparable from the existence of moral agents, notwithstanding God has so ordered his providence over it as to secure the highest possible good."²

Dr. Woods, in his letters to Dr. Taylor, treats first of the possibility of preventing sin. He examines his opponent's statements, one by one, at consid-

1. *Christian Spectator*, p. 335.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 628-653.

erable length and with the purpose of coming exactly to the point in dispute. It is not worth while here to follow these steps minutely, though they furnish a good example of careful argumentation, but the sum of his conclusion may be presented in the following sentences :

“You seem to think there is that in each individual moral agent, which renders it impossible for God to prevent his sinning; and this ground of impossibility you have said is *the very nature of moral agency*; which of course belongs to every moral agent. And I would have it remembered, that this ground of impossibility belongs *equally* to all moral agents—belongs to one as much as to another, and to each moral agent as much as to a moral world. It exists as *perfectly* in each, individually considered, as in all, collectively considered; and relates as much to ‘each sin individually considered,’ as to all sins considered collectively. So that I see not how to avoid the conclusion, that if, from the very nature of moral agency, it was impossible for God to prevent sin in the moral world, it was impossible for him to prevent it in any instance whatever; and to speak of God as actually preventing sin, would be inconsistent. The same as to the conversion and salvation of sinners.”¹

After thus interpreting Dr. Taylor’s assertions as implying a denial of admitted facts, he supports his own view of God’s power in controlling men by quoting from Leighton, the following :

“There is a secret but very powerful virtue in a word, or look, or touch, of this Spirit upon the soul,

1. Works IV, p. 335.

by which it is forced, not with a harsh, but a pleasing violence, and cannot choose but follow it.”¹

He illustrated still further the divine influence in the affairs of the moral world, by reference to the history of Joseph and the crucifixion of Christ.

Dr. Woods does not treat as carefully the question, whether sin is the means of the greatest good, as he does that of its preventability. Still it receives distinct attention. He asks:

“What then does follow from the fact that God makes use of moral evil as one means of influencing moral agents to obedience? It follows, that God saw it proper to do so, that it was a mode of influence which in the exercise of his wisdom he chose—chose in preference to using other means of influence exclusively of this,—chose, not because he was *unable* to preserve his creatures holy by other means without this, but because he saw it to be wisest and best, on the whole, to make use of this means in connection with others.”²

The main argument on this point is that God makes use of sin and therefore it must be wise to do so. This point he considered that Dr. Taylor had really conceded, for in the note appended to his *Concio* he had asserted his full belief that the decrees of God extend to all events, sin included; and that sin considered as incidental, is subject to the divine purpose as fully as when considered a means of good, and had also said:

“We know of no creature of God, whose holiness is secured without that influence which results either

1. Works IV, p. 378.

2. Ibid., IV, p, 420.

directly or indirectly, from the existence of sin and its punishment. How then, can it be shown *from facts*, that God could secure any of his moral creatures in holiness, without this influence?"

Dr. Woods, referring to these statements, says:

"Thus your reasoning in the latter part of the note, is really a confutation,—and if it were only from another writer, I should say, *direct* and *studied* confutation, of what you advance in the former part. You first maintain that sin is *not* the necessary means of the greatest good, and then you maintain that the holiness of intelligent creatures, which you certainly regard as involved in the greatest good, could not in any instances, no, not even by the power of God, be preserved without the existence and punishment of sin."¹

It is evident in this controversy, that the two disputants do not always have precisely the same idea in mind in speaking of sin as the necessary means of the greatest good. Dr. Taylor implies, at times at least, that his opponents consider it the means of the greatest good because of its inherent excellence; Dr. Woods uniformly spoke of sin as evil, and only evil in itself, as a means of good only through the use to which God subjects it in his overruling power. Publishing in his collected works, in 1850, these letters written twenty years before, in an appendix to the second letter, he confesses his inadvertence in accepting Dr. Taylor's words, *the necessary means of the greatest good*, as expressing the opinion of the orthodox. He says:

1. Works, IV, p. 14.

"It must be kept in mind, that it (sin) is never the only means, nor the *chief* means; but is only one of a *series* of means which Divine Providence employs to carry into effect its benevolent designs." ¹

Probably no one ever misunderstood him, the explanation hardly seems necessary.

There was no difference of view between these disputants as to the fact of sin in the world or as to its amount. They both held to the infinite wisdom and the omnipotence of God. They differed as to the reason for the permission of sin. Dr. Woods considered that the alternative before the divine mind was: a moral system being determined upon, either a sinless system of inferior excellence, or a system with sin yet containing the greatest good. Dr. Taylor was averse to admitting that God ever preferred sin to holiness in its place; ever preferred that his commands should be disobeyed, and suggested as the alternative before the divine mind, a moral system with sin incidental to it, or no moral system at all. He said, it has not been proved that this is not the real alternative, and we may resort to it as affording relief from the idea that God really desires the occurrence of the sin which he forbids. He thought there was a broad difference between the two alternatives.

It may be remarked that Calvinists out of New England have not generally, in this country, accepted the statement that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good.

The doctrine of regeneration was not originally included among the peculiarities of the New Haven

1. Works IV, p. 371.

theology. But in 1829 Dr. Taylor reviewed a work of Dr. Gardiner Spring on the Means of Regeneration, and presented views which called forth the charge of Arminianism and of other heresies. It is held by Calvinists of the Old School that regeneration is a work of God's almighty power, not mediated by anything which men can do, is as simple an act as creation. Still it is held that there are certain things which the sinner can perform, such as reading the Scriptures, prayer, attendance upon public worship, which render the divine interposition in his behalf more probable than it would be if these duties were neglected. The Hopkinsian doctrine is that man's ability is equal to his obligation; he ought to repent at once, he can repent at once, he has no need of means, to delay for the use of means is sin, and would be doing evil that good might come. Dr. Taylor was not satisfied with either of these views. In his letter to Dr. Hawes he said :

"I do not believe that it is necessary that the sinner in using the means of regeneration, should commit sin in order to become holy. But I do believe that as a moral agent he is qualified so to use the means of grace, i. e., the truth of God when present to his mind, as to become holy at once, that he is authorized to believe, that through the grace of the Holy Spirit, this may be done."¹

He admitted that in the broad and general sense regeneration includes the means of regeneration in the narrow and proper sense. The latter is setting the affections on God as the chief object of love and

1. *Christian Spectator*, 1832, p. 174 ; Crocker's *Catastrophe*, p. 179.

service. Such a choice requires a knowledge of God, a conviction that his service is desirable, that worldliness is unprofitable; and the choice is made only by means of such knowledge and conviction. They are therefore the means of regeneration, though the word may be used in a broader sense, including the knowledge and conviction and the renunciation of the world, with the choice of God in one comprehensive act. The use of means, as thus explained, Dr. Taylor held, does not involve guilt, since it is prompted by self-love, the natural desire of happiness, and not by the selfish principle, at least this may be the case, and, in every instance of actual conversion, is the case. In the choice of God in the place of the world, from the motive of self-love, he held that the selfish principle is held in suspense by the Holy Spirit. He did not admit that this view of regeneration left one for a time without moral character, because the selfish principle remained in full force except at the one point to which the thoughts were at the moment directed. He held also that the entire complex process, suppression of the selfish principle, consideration of the truth, and turning to God, were but one complex act, and occupied no appreciable duration of time.

A few of his statements will aid to an understanding of his position. "God tells the sinner that it is better to obey than to disobey him." In view of this call "the appropriate tendency of the feeling is to the voluntary act of sober, solemn consideration." "Here the mental process of using the means of regeneration does or does not begin. If he thus

considers, it begins ; and now the appropriate tendency of consideration is to deeper emotion." Then by the mutual influence of thought and feeling the truth tends "to produce regeneration." "When these tendencies are not successfully counteracted by opposing tendencies, when, by the strivings of the Spirit, they are perpetuated and increased, then it is that the selfish principle not only suffers temporary suspensions, but grows weaker and weaker in each instance of its returning activity and dominion, until at some point before the heart fixes on God, the power and influence of this principle wholly cease from the mind." When this selfish principle is suspended and the sinner sees the worthlessness of this world and the terrible consequences of sin, he must desire the salvation offered him in the gospel and make choice of it.

When asked, what is the moral character of this desire, he replied :

"Instead therefore, of involving either selfish or holy affection, this desire of the sinner is the mere dictate of his sensitive nature, fixing on an interest in divine mercy, as the known and necessary means of escaping what above all things he desires to escape, the fearful doom of endless death."¹

He contended that this is the only method of using the means of regeneration.

"We say then, that the sinner under the call of present duty, is authorized to believe in the *practicability* of present duty, and that the view we have

1. *Christian Spectator*, 1829, pp. 227-230.

taken of using the means of regeneration, shows the way, and the only way, in which it will prove to be a fact, that such duty will be done."

"But we have shown them the way, and the only way, in which they *may* instantly comply with the terms of salvation, even *putting themselves at once to the act of compliance.*"¹

He held that the sinner never really uses the means of regeneration, till the moment of regeneration, that while regeneration is a moral, not physical change, it still is never produced by mere moral suasion, but by the truth as presented by the Holy Spirit. Still he held that the change by which the sinner becomes a new man, is effected by his own action put forth in perfect consistency with the laws of moral agency. He held that the truth has a tendency to convert the soul and would actually convert it if its influence were not obstructed, but selfishness so suppresses its power over the sensitive nature that it never does transform the soul except as made effective by the Holy Spirit.

He considered the doctrine that the truth appeals to self-love, not selfishness one of great importance. He says of revelation:

"By appealing with its motives, not to the selfish principle of the heart, but to self-love, it not only finds direct access to the mind of the moral agent, but it reaches the ultimate seat and source of every moral preference and of all the subsequent movements of moral agency."²

Dr. Taylor complained often during the period of his controversies, and to the last, that he was misun-

1. *Christian Spectator*, 1829, pp. 706, 711.

2. *Ibid.*, 1829, p. 226.

derstood. It is probably true that he was misunderstood at times, for his distinctions were in many instances subtle, and the consistency of his published statements is not always clear at the first glance.

Among those who criticised his views of regeneration, Dr. Bennett Tyler was the most conspicuous, as he was among the ablest reviewers of the entire scheme of Taylorism. His main objections to the New Haven teachings on regeneration were those which would be most readily suggested. It was asserted that real, effective suspension of the selfish principle by the Holy Spirit is regeneration, and if this takes place before regeneration, then there is a regeneration before regeneration: it was also asserted, if men are induced to turn to God from motives inherent in their own hearts, they are not totally depraved: it was further asserted, if men turn from the world to God from promptings within themselves, then the doctrine of election has no place in the scheme of salvation; it was also maintained that regeneration by a choice springing from one's own heart, would not be regeneration, would be no new creation. The entire scheme was said to tend to Arminianism and Pelagianism. It is not necessary to follow Dr. Tyler's arguments in detail. He was a thorough Edwardean and introduced no novelties into New England Theology.

The opposition to New Haven Theology, was so decided in Connecticut, that it led in 1834, to the establishment of a new theological seminary in which the old doctrines were to be taught. This institution was located at East Windsor, and bore the name

Theological Institute of Connecticut. In 1865, it was removed to Hartford and is now known as Hartford Theological Seminary.

CHAPTER VII.

OBERLIN THEOLOGY.

The Institution at Oberlin was established in 1834. In 1835 Rev. Asa Mahan was elected president of the college and Rev. Charles G. Finney professor in the theological department. These noted preachers came in contact with large numbers of Christian people in various parts of the country, by their ministrations in many churches, and in presenting the needs and aims of their institution. Finney had already acquired a wide reputation by evangelistic work, extending through ten or more years, as well as by his pastoral labors in the city of New York. The doctrine that became associated with their names and awakened much interest for a time was that of Christian perfection. In the course of their theological instructions some peculiar views found expression and served to distinguish the institution, and, in a degree, separate it from other like institutions of the country. President Mahan was a graduate of Andover Seminary. Professor Finney had been under New School influences, so that they naturally made the New England Theology their starting point. Their development of doctrines, in any divergence

from this theology, has not been widely accepted and hardly belongs to this present treatise, but the importance of the institution and the many affiliations between the Oberlin moral philosophy and anthropology and those of New England make it proper to pass them briefly in review. The interest taken by these divines in the doctrine of perfection probably had some influence in fixing their views upon other topics on which they differed from their brethren.

Christian Perfection.

Finney seems to have embraced this doctrine about the time of his going to Oberlin and early in his association with Mahan. His views had previously been precisely those ordinarily entertained by the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches of this country. In a lecture delivered in the city of New York in the winter of 1834-5, on "Growth in Grace," he says :

"To grow better, implies a more clear and distinct knowledge of the breadth of God's law, and a growing sense of the sinfulness of sin. But the more clear an individual's views become of the standard, the *lower* will be the estimate which he forms of himself, because the clearer will be his views of the distance at which he still is from the pure and perfect standard of holiness to which God requires him to conform all his conduct."

... "I have been confounded when I have heard some persons talk of their purity, and of being entirely pure of their sins, and of being perfect. They must have vastly different views of themselves from what Job and Isaiah had."¹

1. Quoted in *Exposition of Oberlin Perfectionism by the Presbytery of Cleveland*, pp. 75, 76.

But Finney says that he preached the doctrine of perfection, of entire consecration in New York in the winter of 1836-7, that his discourses were reported in the *New York Evangelist*, and that they elicited no unfavorable comment so far as he knew.¹

After the subject attracted attention and roused vigorous opposition, while Finney and Mahan seem to have agreed in sentiment, Mahan took the task of formulating the doctrine and replying to attacks upon it. A summary statement of his views will be first presented.

These views are to be found in a series of discourses, published under the title *Scripture Doctrine of Christian Perfection*. The work passed through several editions. The following statements are taken from the fourth edition, published in 1840. He announces the question on which he and his opponents differ thus:

“Whether we may now, during the progress of the present life, attain to entire perfection in holiness, and whether it is proper for us to indulge the anticipation of making such attainments.”²

For the solution of the question, he says we must look simply to the provision made in the gospel for our sanctification. In the course of the discussion, however, reference was frequently made to man's ability to keep the law. At present, we give the argument as it is derived from the Scriptures. It is inferred from the following considerations that perfection is attainable.

1. Theology, English Edition, p 511.

2. Ibid., p, 15.

(1) "The Bible positively affirms that provision is made in the gospel for the attainment of that state, and that to make such provision is one of the great objects of Christ's redemption." (2) "Perfection in holiness is promised to the Christian in the new covenant under which he is now placed." (3) "I infer that a state of perfect holiness is attainable in this life, from the commands of Scripture, addressed to Christians under the new covenant." (4) "The attainment of this state in this life is the declared object for which the Holy Spirit dwells in the hearts of God's people, and for which all the gifts that Christ bestowed upon the church when he ascended up on high, were conferred." (5) "As a fifth argument, we will consider the prayer dictated by our Saviour to his disciples, together with the one put up by him, in behalf of the church, on the evening preceding his crucifixion." (6) "Inspired men made the attainment of this particular state the subject of definite, fervent and constant prayer." (7) "Many promises of Scripture are conditioned on this state." (8) It may be argued "from the testimony of Scripture that some did attain to that state." (9) "No one can point out an incentive to sin, from within or around him, for which a specific remedy is not provided in the gospel." (10) "No one can lay down a line this side of that state, beyond which it is not practicable for the Christian to go." (11) In favor of the doctrine is "the striking contrast between the language of inspiration and of the church upon this subject, whenever the church has denied the doctrine." (12) "The convictions of the church, as universally expressed in her covenants, demand the admission of the attainableness of perfect holiness in this life." (13) "The tendency of this doctrine, as compared with that of its opposite, is another important reason why we should admit it." (14) "The absurdity of the common supposition, that the Christian is always

perfectly sanctified at, or a few minutes before, death, and never at an earlier period.”¹

In connection with this doctrine of perfection, Mahan made much of the new covenant under which we now live. The old covenant is the moral law, “the covenant originally made with Adam, re-announced at Mount Sinai, and which now exists between God and all unfallen spirits.” The new covenant is the covenant of grace, obscurely disclosed in the Old Testament, fully revealed in Christ who is its Mediator, who promises on the condition of faith:

(1) “A confirmed state of pure and perfect holiness, such as is required by the moral law, (2) the full pardon of all sin, or entire justification, (3) the perpetual fruition of the divine presence and favor, (4) the consequent universal prevalence of the gospel.”

He says of these two covenants:

“The ‘surety’ of the first covenant is the creature himself. The surety of the new covenant is Christ.” “The first covenant is a dispensation of justice. The new is a dispensation of mercy.” “Whatever the old covenant, or the moral law, requires of the creature, the new covenant promises to the believer.”²

The Oberlin theologians desired that this doctrine should appear prominently as a scriptural doctrine and therefore placed special emphasis on those arguments which have now been adduced. They desired to promote the piety of the church by

1. *Doctrine of Christian Perfection*, pp. 20-47.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 80-82.

preaching entire consecration and did not aim to establish any new philosophical principle or any new psychological truth. Still they were obliged to explain their position in ways that introduced the principles of mental and moral philosophy. They did not hold to the possibility of man's absolute, ideal holiness in the present life, but to sinless perfection, that is, a course of conduct free from transgressions of the law. They did not teach the possibility of a devotion like that of the spirits in heaven, but they taught that any man could consecrate to God such powers as he had, he could honestly and sincerely serve God with whatever abilities he possessed. This led to the assertion that every man has ability to do his duty, his entire duty. Mahan did not insist on this so strenuously as some of his associates but implied it in the following as among the things on which all agreed ;

"All agree that this entire perfection in holiness is definitely and positively required of us in the Bible, and that for not rendering such obedience to God, we are wholly without excuse. * * * All agree that no line can be drawn this side of entire perfection in holiness, beyond which it is not practical for the Christian to go."¹

Finney affirmed this doctrine of ability in all his theological writings, in his sermons, and in his classroom teaching. Professor Wright, speaking of this class of theologians, says :

"What they were all agreed in, however, was the natural ability of the human will to keep the law of

1. Doctrine of Christian Perfection, pp. 14-15.

God, or, in other words, the equation between the extent of obligation and that of natural ability.”¹

Finney added to this doctrine of natural ability that of the simplicity of moral action. He held that all moral action is that of the will, meaning by will the power of executive volition, and that all moral character at any point of time, is in the choice at that time. Therefore, since the will is competent to but one choice at a time, whenever a person makes a right choice he is perfect for the moment, and if he makes a succession of right choices, he is perfect so long as the succession continues. He held that any real choice is a sincere and honest choice, and that positive honesty and sincerity are perfection. To the objection that a right ultimate end may be chosen, yet with imperfect virtue for the lack of proper intensity in the choice, he replied:

“The degree of obligation must be just equal to the mind’s honest estimate of the value of the end. The degree of obligation must vary as the light varies. This is the doctrine of the Bible and of reason. If this is so, it follows that the mind is honest, when, and only when, it devotes its strength to the end in view, with an intensity just proportioned to its present light, or estimate of the value of that end.”²

This doctrine of perfection called forth much opposition in the early years of its promulgation and brought the institution with which its advocates were connected into a good deal of disrepute. It is not necessary, however, to notice at length the replies

1. Life of Finney, p. 210.

2. Theology Oberlin Edition, pp. 97, 98.

that were made to its claims, as they do not form a part of the Oberlin theology. A brief reference to a few of them may be of historic interest.

It will be noticed at once that the Biblical and philosophical arguments do not wholly coincide. Both Mahan and Finney affirmed again and again that there was no hope of a perfect Christian life, except through the influences of the Holy Spirit, and by means of the gracious provisions of the gospel. Their argument from man's ability, therefore, was rather against them, than in their favor, for dependence upon grace was a confession that ability of itself was inadequate to the result. The doctrine of the simplicity of moral action, again, even excluded the influence of grace upon moral character, for it made any right choice of itself a perfect choice, and the chooser a perfect man. But these points were not made prominent in the discussion, there was so much of earnestness and deep conviction on both sides, that the religious sentiment greatly prevailed over the philosophical. In falling back upon the grace offered in the gospel as the decisive element in the discussion the disputants were compelled to rest upon the facts of Christian experience. No one could decide from *a priori* considerations what degree of holiness God would produce in his people. The only question, was, what has he done?

Dr. Woods, of Andover, published in the American Biblical Repository for 1841 an extended "Examination of the Doctrine of Perfection." Though he intended to treat the general subject his remarks were directed chiefly to the positions taken

by President Mahan. He criticises the advocates of perfection for assuming that they alone teach that the provisions of the gospel are adequate to the sanctification of believers, whereas all Christians hold to the doctrine, but hold that the full effect of the provisions made may not take place in this life. He charges his opponents with claiming to be the only ones who teach that complete sanctification is attainable, whereas all hold it to be attainable, but the question of fact remains, have any in this life already attained it? Woods argues "that the religion of God's people throughout the present life is progressive, beginning at their conversion, and advancing from one degree of holiness to another." This is evidenced by the fact that believers are required to grow in grace; that Christian life is a warfare, and the war is within; that Christians desire holiness as a future good not yet attained; that the followers of Christ pray that their fellow Christians may be sanctified; that Christians suffer afflictions sent upon them as chastisements; that God may overrule the sinfulness that remains in his children to the end of life, so as to make it the means of honoring in the highest degree his own infinite wisdom and grace; that the most advanced Christians have a deep and growing sense of remaining depravity.¹

The Presbytery of Troy, members of which had sustained Mr. Finney in his evangelistic labors, adopted resolutions adverse to the Oberlin theory. They understood the doctrine to be: "Christian men do attain in some cases during the present life, to a

1. Reprint of Art. in *Biblical Repository* in *Wood's Works*, IV, pp. 501-510.

state of perfect holiness, excluding sin in every form, and for an indefinite period they remain in that state." The Presbytery held that the burden of proof rested on the affirmative; that the statement was not proved; that the attainable might not be attained; that the provisions, though adequate, might not be used; that commands, promises, prayers were under conditions; that texts cited in proof of the doctrine were misinterpreted; that the Bible records the defects of those spoken of as perfect.

Mr. Finney considered that the Presbytery raised a false issue.¹

The Presbytery of Cleveland, having Oberlin in its immediate vicinity, must have felt the influence of its new teachings more than ecclesiastical bodies at a greater distance. At its meeting in October, 1840, it adopted a report, prepared by a previously appointed committee, in which the reason for its consideration of the subject is thus set forth:

"As those who are 'set for the defence of the gospel,' we design to speak plainly, and we think not unnecessarily, of a system now generally known by the name of 'Oberlin Perfectionism.' The peculiarities of this system have now, for more than two years, been industriously, if not successfully, urged upon the attention of many in the most of our churches, and accompanied with appeals, and suggestions, obviously tending to subvert the system of faith, and practice, heretofore adopted amongst us, and to undermine confidence, both in the settled principles of the church, and in those who teach them and defend them."²

1. Finney's Theology, English Edition, p. 583.

2. Exposition, Etc., p. 5.

This report presents a thorough exposition of this peculiar Oberlin doctrine, controverting its main positions at great length, for a document of its kind, occupying as it does, eighty-four closely printed pages. Its statement of the case and its argumentation, do not differ essentially from those of opponents before spoken of. A few points in addition to the criticisms of Dr. Woods and the Troy Presbytery, will be noticed. Among the peculiarities of the controverted scheme are :

“The sentiment that heretofore the standard of Christian perfection has been set much too high.”¹ “That which first leads people to sin is their innocent constitution.”² “The term flesh * * * made to signify mere subjection to bodily appetites, i. e. bad dietetic habits, etc.”³ “We are competent witnesses to our entire sanctification.”

Here follows a quotation from Mr. Finney :

“It is a point upon which we have the testimony of our own consciousness, which is the highest kind of evidence. And we are just as competent witnesses to our entire sanctification, as that we have any religion at all.”⁴

The tendency of the system is said to be : “To lower down the demands of God’s law ;” “to foster spiritual pride ;” “to cherish egotism, self-ignorance and carnal security ;” “to foster contempt of pastoral instruction, advice and admonition ;” “to produce neglect of the ordinances of the gospel, to the disuse of prayer for the sanctifying influences of the Spirit.”⁵

1. Exposition, Etc., p. 12.

2. Ibid., p. 17.

3. Ibid., p. 23.

4. Ibid., p. 36.

5. Ibid., pp. 79, 80.

These positions are sustained mostly by quotations from the *Oberlin Evangelist*.

The criticisms of the Oberlin position which have been referred to illustrate the very general opposition which it called forth for a few years before and after 1840. But both advocacy of and opposition to, the system died away many years ago. Whether it is still maintained by any one is hardly a matter of inquiry, the doctrine certainly constitutes no dividing line between parties. President Fairchild holds to the doctrine in a modified form, if at all. He says there is no support to the idea "that by a present act of faith all necessary future faith or future obedience may be secured, so that we shall never fall or falter again."

"Permanent sanctification as distinct from present faith and obedience is not his (the regenerate man's) immediate duty, or responsibility, or even privilege." ¹

The doctrine of perfection has never been a part of New England Theology. Some have held that on the ground of the simplicity of moral action it might be fairly inferred from the exercise scheme, but Emmons, the most thorough adherent of that scheme, did not accept such an inference. He says:

"The best of saints are imperfectly holy in this life, and their imperfection in holiness consists in their sometimes having holy, and sometimes unholy affections. * * * A train of holy and unholy affections forms the heart of a saint; but a train of constant, uninterrupted sinful affections forms the heart of a sinner." ²

1. Theology, pp. 284, 285.

2. Works, VI. p. 409.

He does not admit that the unholy exercise in the heart of the regenerate man transforms him from a saint to a sinner, though it is perfectly unholy, because it does not constitute the character of the man."

"This objection is more ambiguous than pertinent. Saint signifies a holy, and sinner a sinful character. But a single volition, or a single external action does not form a character, which is always founded on a course of conduct. * * * Though a saint may sometimes feel and act just like a sinner, yet he deserves not the character of a sinner, because he habitually feels and acts very differently from a total enemy of God."¹

Dr. Hopkins, so far from holding to the attainability of holiness in this life, did not even think it on the whole desirable.

"It is, in itself considered, desirable to be perfectly holy; and this must appear desirable to all Christians, viewed in and by itself. But as God has determined and declared this shall not be, that any man shall be without sin in this life; and, therefore, it is known that it is not, on the whole, best that any man should be perfectly holy in this world; in this view of it, it is not desirable, nor ought any to pray for it."²

Interest in Oberlin theology is mainly connected with the doctrine of perfection, but it diverges from that of New England at a few points which deserve passing notice.

Ability—Finney was wholly a Pelagian in his view of the will. He says right action is always possible and this implies power to will the right.

1. Works, V, p. 206.

2. Ibid., II, p. 33.

"It is nonsense to talk of ability to do when we exclude the ability to will."¹

He utterly discarded Edwards' distinction between natural and moral ability, made moral ability, as Edwards termed it, the condition of the existence of natural ability. A few of his phrases will show the position he assumed:

"Edwards makes ability freedom from hindrance, but this is no ability, ability implies power to will."
 . . . "Edwards makes natural inability lack of power to do if we would, but in morals and religion this is no inability at all, for willing is doing."
 . . . "Ability to will in accordance with moral law must be natural ability to obey God."

. . . "Edwards' moral inability is an inability of will, so a natural inability, for all ability is of the will. His inability is real disobedience, and natural inability to obey. His moral ability is obedience, and natural inability to disobey."

"The human mind necessarily assumes the freedom of the human will as a first truth of reason."

. . . "The distinction of natural and moral inability is nonsensical."²

He considers that Edwards' error was denying that moral agents are the causes of their own actions, into which he had been led by the Lockean philosophy. Finney held, on the other hand, that there must be direct or indirect ability, wherever there is obligation. If grace is at any time needed in the discharge of duties we can avail ourselves of the provisions of grace. He did not mean by this that

1. *Theology*, English Edition, p. 482; *Theology*, Oberlin Edition, p. 322.

2. *Theology*, English Edition, pp. 481-491; *Theology*, Oberlin Edition, pp. 323-332.

a gracious ability is granted, in the Arminian sense of the term; this he held to be an absurdity, but that we have ability to make use of privileges accorded us. He said of gracious ability:

"The question is not whether, as a matter of fact, men ever do obey God without the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit. I hold they never do."¹

President Fairchild seems to agree with Finney as to the will. He says:

"We know that we can pursue either of the courses open to us; this is the beginning and end of our freedom. Our freedom belongs strictly only to the governing choice."²

He finds the proof of freedom in consciousness.

"We know that we are free and that is the end of the argument."³

He replies to the objection that we are conscious only of the act, that "we are conscious of the act and of the freedom of it."⁴ He denies that the will is always as the strongest motive but maintains that God can control free agents without destroying their freedom.⁵

Regeneration—The Oberlin view of this subject is a not unnatural inference from some of the New England positions, yet is not to be considered a part of its theology. Like Emmons, Finney identified regeneration and conversion. Both held to the ac-

1. Theology, English Edition, p. 501 ; Oberlin Edition, p. 342.

2. Theology, p. 38. 3. Ibid., p. 39. 4. Ibid., p. 46. 5. Ibid., p. 47.

tivity of the soul in the beginning of its new life, but here the similarity ended. Emmons held that the soul works out its salvation because God works in it to will; Finney held that the soul chooses a new ultimate end of action because God demonstrates the wisdom of the choice. Finney makes a choice the decisive thing in entering on a new life. He admits that the mind is passive in receiving instruction or enlightenment, but this is no part of regeneration. Regeneration is turning to God, or is choosing the chief good, and is an act put forth as the result of persuasives. It results from the effect of truth upon the mind. An effect adequate to the new birth is only produced by the demonstration of the Holy Spirit, but the effect is of like kind with that produced by the ordinary teacher of the truth. If the preacher could make the truth as clear as the Divine Spirit does, he could convert the soul. This theory of regeneration corresponds with his conception of moral action. He really held to but one right moral choice, that of the good of being, and one wrong moral choice, that of self-indulgence, or self as the object of indulgence. All other volitions come under one or the other of these ends of action and are controlled by them. He says:

“We have seen that the choice of an end implies, and while the choice continues, necessitates, the choice of the known conditions and means of the end, and also the putting forth of volition to secure the end.”¹

... “Thus, it is self-evident that moral character

1. Theology, Oberlin Edition, p. 24.

belongs to the ultimate intention, and that a man's character is as the end for which he lives and moves, and has his being. Virtue consists in consecration to the right end, the end to which God is consecrated. This end is, and must be, by virtue of its own nature, the ground of obligation." ¹

His belief in the universal application of the principle that the ultimate end dominates conduct and is decisive of moral character, is indicated by the following. Speaking of the child, he says:

"He knows that he ought to will his parents' happiness, and his own happiness, and the happiness of the world, and of God; and he knows that obedience to his parents sustains the relation of a means to this end." ²

This leads directly to the position that,—

"Regeneration must consist in a change in the attitude of the will, or a change in its ultimate choice, intention or preference; a change from selfishness to benevolence." ³

Coincident with this thought is the statement,—

"Regeneration is nothing else than the will being duly influenced by the truth." ⁴

President Finney's view of justification has already been spoken of. Upon other doctrines he agreed mainly with the New England divines of the new school. He said, indeed, of the atonement, that it is not the ground of our justification, which he made

1. Theology, Oberlin Edition, p. 29.

2. Ibid., p. 44. 3. Ibid., p. 287. 4. Ibid., p. 289.

to be the love of God, but he held it to be the consideration on which it is safe for God to pardon sin, and maintained that the redeemed are saved from penal sufferings by the vicarious sufferings of Christ.”¹

1. Theology, Oberlin Edition, p. 271, 272.

CHAPTER VIII.

IS THE LATER THEOLOGY EDWARDEAN?

The "New Divinity" of the last century has now become old. But a later new theology has been brought to our attention. It is a scheme of modern belief not yet fully developed. It is doubtful if any one would attempt to write it out in full, if any two persons would precisely agree as to its teachings. Still the term is proper, needed in our vocabulary. There has been for many years a tendency to hold to, and give utterance to, beliefs other than those that are traditional. It may be that all the ideas of the present new theology have been recognized heretofore, but they now appear in new connections. They could not be described as Calvinistic or as Arminian, but are embraced as instinctive beliefs without much regard to their logical form.

This theology appears first as a dissent from the old theology. Young men of generous minds and scholarly tastes demur to the teachings of the standard theologians, turn for help to such authors as Coleridge and Maurice, and, without formulating any scheme of their own, decline to accept church creeds, —especially the more distinguishing doctrines of those

creeds. It is said of such men by their friends and admirers, that it is simply impossible for them to adhere to the old inherited beliefs. This argument,—simple impossibility of belief—has been considered very satisfactory and indicative of intellect of a high order.

A doctrine of divine love has also been preached as being inconsistent with the severer doctrines of the creeds. God's love has been illustrated by that of a mother, a friend, a guardian with the sense of long established responsibility, and men have been urged to have no fear, no lack of confidence, because of the ineffable tenderness of the Father in heaven. The love on which this teaching is based is not that principle of benevolence that pervades the government of God, but the tender sentiment that would, if possible, forbid the existence of any pain or distress.

There are also Christian experiences which are put to service in opposition to stern doctrine. Christian life is made external activity, joy in the happiness of others, the free and genial discharge of duties without self-examination or the questioning of one's motives, sympathy, geniality, spontaneity take the place of law and obedience to God. In the progress towards the position of those who deny the real authority of the Bible, there is a resting place where theologians commingle the authority of reason and the Scriptures. The teaching of the Bible is to be accepted, but the Bible is literature and is to be interpreted with reference to time and place of composition, and the meaning of each book must be reached through the character of its author. The Bible doctrines must be

received, but we must not hold to anything as positive that reason cannot comprehend, the rest must be rejected or relegated to the unknown and mysterious. We are to accept the incarnation, but may explain it to ourselves as similar to the indwelling of God in every man; we are to accept the atonement, but need not go beyond the view that it is the means of reconciliation either of God to man or man to God; man lives in a state of probation, that belongs to the very nature of a remedial system, but we can not fix the close of probation, we must suppose that it continues till the force of the remedial agencies is exhausted. In such ways revealed truths are brought down to the measure of the human understanding,—and that by men who would consider themselves as holding substantially to the traditional theology.

Those who accept the conclusions of science, that the human race has existed on the earth for countless ages, probably a hundred thousand years at least, that the progress of the world is by evolution, and that therefore original sin is not by a fall from innocence but by inheritance of an animal nature, consider that the old theology needs no refutation. To them the history of mankind is its redemption; redemption being the tedious and painful elimination of inherited brutality, the slow accretion of one maxim of prudence after another, of one truth of morals after another, accompanied by the hope of a final complete theory and practice of righteousness. With this is connected the idea of the existence of God. The ethical nature of man has now attained such a development, that one must believe in the existence of a personal ruler

of the world, who combines in his nature all that is holiest and best. He must, as a wise and almighty being, determine to effect the salvation of the entire human race. The doctrine of reprobation is blasphemous, the doctrine of conditional immortality is charging God with weakness and failure, salvation of a part by election is charging God with monstrous immorality, and is what no honorable man would accept. Salvation by the suffering of another is absurd, it must be by the agony and bloody sweat of the one who needs salvation. Thus the doctrines of sin and grace fall of themselves. They are discarded by all thoughtful men as at war with good morals and all nobility of character. Not only the doctrines laid down in the creeds are swept away in a moment by the light of science, but affiliated speculations, through which relief of difficulties has been sought, such as those pertaining to the limit of probation, the substitutionary value of the God-man, the tendency to fixedness of character, are relegated to the limbo of vanities.

Contemporaneously with the views just noticed, but not growing out of them, has been the attempt to make Christ the centre of theology. The attempt to recast the old theology so as to make it Christocentric, has not been eminently successful, but those who cut loose from the old theology and begin with Christ as he appears in history, are able to form a scheme of doctrine which accords with their idea of his teaching. We are born into a world where Christ and Christianity are the most potent facts that come within our experience. The direct method of learn-

ing the truth—the great truths of religion—is to get the mind of Christ. We must accept his words, his teachings, his principles as the truth itself. Our education in theology is acquiring the consciousness of Christ. We must accept his view of God, of man, of sin, of redemption. A God that is not worthy of Christ is not the true God. As Christ came to save, not destroy, God cannot be a destroyer, must be a Saviour; as Christ seeks the lost, God cannot permit any to be lost; as Christ loves all indiscriminately, God can not make an election among men. It makes no difference from what source we get our idea of God, whether from the Bible or creeds, or the works of nature and the facts of history, if the idea is not to be found in the consciousness of Christ, it is false and must be rejected. The main characteristics of Deity, as thus deduced, are Fatherhood, unmodified love, wisdom that permits no waste in evolution, essential oneness with humanity. Under a Ruler possessed of such attributes, man is continually working off the beast in his nature and approaching the divine likeness.

The new theology accepts the results of the higher criticism of the Bible, but makes little account of them. It rejects the traditional view of the Scriptures on other grounds while it accepts portions of them as of highest value. It sees that the Bible teaches election, reprobation, vindictory punishment, and is so far unchristian and to be rejected, but it sees also, that in many places it speaks the mind of Christ and is so far to be accepted. It recognizes the soul-inspiring influence of the book

in time past and maintains that history establishes its superhuman value.

Not with apparent consistency with the doctrine of evolution, and not in entire accord with the prominence given to Christ, the new theology speaks of God as Creator, as Ruler, as responsible for the existence and destiny of the human race, as designing certain ends to be attained in his government. It accords to him such control of affairs that the conduct of men flows on, act after act, in fulfilment of a scheme of determinism. It is probably impossible for an evolutionist to avoid the doctrine of determinism, but the new theology apparently traces it to a divine source, and looks upon it as directed to an appointed result.

There is here no attempt to delineate the entire scheme of the new theology,—in fact, it does not claim to be a completed scheme—but the doctrines already brought to view are sufficient to show its nature and tendency. Its peculiarity is mostly in its combinations. It seems to be Augustinian in its view of God as sovereign, yet it wholly denies the doctrine of grace. It accepts the Pelagian view of human works, and might perhaps accept its use of the term grace, but would not consider the term as of any value. This scheme does not require any historical illustrations, it stands out by itself as a mere scheme of natural reason. It is simply man's reading of the divine in nature. Its views of God are *a priori*, its view of his work is *a priori*. Its teaching is, God will do this and that, of course he will, no one can think otherwise. He will bring the

world to such and such results, he must do it, for nothing else would be right. Its view of Christ is no exception to this statement, for it looks upon him as merely a product of nature, one of the facts that confront us in the history of the world.

The question before us is this: is the new theology Edwardean? It is well known that there has been a tendency of late to claim Edwards as the leader of the liberals in theology. It has been said, perhaps not with absolute seriousness, that if he were now living he would accept the doctrine of future probation. It has been said, in all seriousness, that he is the real father of New England transcendentalism. J. McLeod Campbell refers to him in his treatise on the atonement, and attempts to find support in the teachings of the great American theologian. F. D. Maurice commends him to American thinkers as affording the starting point for their speculations. He says of him:

"In his own country he retains and always must retain a great power. We should imagine that all American theology and philosophy, whatever changes it may undergo, with whatever foreign elements it may be associated, must be cast in his mould. New Englanders who try to substitute Berkeley, or Butler, or Malebranche, or Cardillac, or Kant, or Hegel, for Edwards, or to form their minds upon any of them, must be forcing themselves into an unnatural position, and must suffer from the effort."¹

Dr. G. A. Gordon, in his "Christ of To-Day," says:

"However insignificant, the present discussion is a true continuation of the theological tradition which

I. Quoted by Prof. A. V. G. Allen. *Life of Edwards*, p. 387.

dates from our greatest theologian, Jonathan Edwards.”¹

The Unitarians also are not without hope of support from the same source and have long been calling upon the custodian of his manuscripts for the publication of the treatise on the trinity.

It is difficult to define Edwardeanism, or to give an orderly arrangement to its contents. Edwards' thoughts were so superabundant and suggested from so many sources that their connection and consistency are not always obvious. He was a thorough idealist, but was obliged to use language to be interpreted in accord with a different philosophy, so that his meaning is not always clear. If he had written less and re-written more, he would perhaps have adjusted his thoughts more perfectly to the apprehension of his readers. He seems to have written a good deal for his own private use. Still the spirit of his writings may be pretty clearly apprehended. With him God was all in all, was the *alpha* and *omega*, all things were of him and to him. This fundamental principle is announced in many places, but more distinctly than elsewhere in his treatise on the “Last End of God in Creation.” God is the sum of being and all things must be made for him. He creates that he may see himself reflected in the creature, all things go from him and return to him, emanation is for the sake of remanation. Whatever subordinate ends may be served by the processes of nature, the last end of God's work is his own glory. Edwards' wonderful visions, in which he seemed to be carried away

1. Christ of To-Day, p. 8.

by a divine rapture confirmed him in this view. Though he portrayed the sufferings of those finally condemned in appalling terms, he considered that the woes of the lost would be no ground of suffering to the saints in glory, because their complete absorption in the displays of the divine majesty would fully occupy their attention. This sentiment, which took so strong a hold of his feelings, he argued in carefully considered appeals to the intellect in his treatise on virtue, and made it the foundation of all his theological thinking.

He considered that human sinfulness consists mainly in original sin. This he looked upon as due to the fall for which men are justly held responsible. He had no thought of identifying man's corruption with an inherited animal nature, it would, to his mind, have relieved man substantially of his guilt to have made his sin simply a too facile yielding to the animal impulses.

He held that the renewal of men is by a reversal of their natural tendencies, not by development through them. He was a thorough believer in grace according to the Augustinian doctrine of it, he considered it a divine scheme, an organized energy by which the powers of sin are counteracted and overcome. He considered that Christian life consists in holy affections which are directly implanted by the Holy Spirit.

He did not believe that the developments of sin result finally in holiness, but that sin indulged leads to deeper sin, that evil men wax worse and worse. He has left no sermons on the mellowing influence of sin, but taught that God permits the wicked to fill

the measure of their guilt, and that then wrath comes upon them to the uttermost. He did not even believe that moral reforms and the conscientious discharge of duties lead to a holy life, but classed reason and conscience with the other human faculties as corrupt, as incompetent to a discernment of the real nature of righteousness, or to act as guides in a virtuous life.

“He knows nothing of a gradual maturing of the will under a divine education. There is no such thing with him as a quiet, unconscious growth in the kingdom of heaven.”¹

A comparison of these two schemes will show that one of them could not possibly be developed from the other. The new theology resembles that of Edwards in its view of God as the primal source of power, as the *alpha*, but there the similarity ceases, its *omega* is quite different from that of the theology of Edwards. The new system has much to say of the ethical nature of Deity, of humanity as constituent of Deity, and seems to make the end of creation the glorification of humanity.

The new theology makes salvation nobility of character. The development of the divine in man, of the primal germ of humanity, so as to give it power over the animal nature, is restoration, redemption, regeneration, and is attained through travail and sorrow, can not be a simple gift of God. The new theology knows nothing of grace in the orthodox sense of the word, it knows nothing of pardon of

1. Allen's Life of Edwards, p. 148.

sin, remission of penalty, justification through the righteousness of another, its salvation is improvement through discipline. In spirit and doctrine this scheme is totally at war with Edwardeanism.

There can be no doubt that the doctrine of evolution would have had a powerful fascination for Edwards' mind, and his view of direct divine communication with the soul opens the way to the modern doctrine of inspiration, but he very pointedly distinguished inspiration from such divine converse.

The question might be asked, whether Edwards unconsciously uttered sentiments premonitory of coming changes. There are those who are fond of finding in great men the prophets of the age, the seers or diviners who apprehend in advance the issues which the age is working out. There were reformers before the Reformation. There were Puritans and Separatists who claimed the rights of Englishmen before the era of toleration. There were those who predicted the abolition of American slavery before the Civil War. Did Edwards in any way give intimation of the coming trend of thought in any department of speculation? His mind seems to have been constructed in such alliance with nature, that he did apprehend the openings for scientific progress, and might have stood by the side of Huyghens and Newton, but he preferred to turn his thoughts in a different direction. What was his trend in his chosen career? He has left no elaborate scheme of philosophy, but his views on many points have been clearly expressed and are in accord with those of some of his contemporaries, and are deducible from the teach-

ings of his predecessors. His views of sin and redemption, of grace manifested in calling and regeneration, were eminently conservative and deny beforehand the main positions of the new theology. If he could have developed his history of the scheme of redemption and have given theology a new form, it may be that he would have anticipated the Hegelian philosophy of history, but his published works give no evidence of it. On the whole, Edwards' mission seems to have been to serve his own generation, and thereby the coming generations; to oppose Arminianism, to assert the prevalence of the Divine Will, and to promote vital godliness in the churches.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

It is the purpose of the following table to bring together and set in chronological order the important events in the development of the New England Theology. A few extraneous events are also noticed in order to give the historical setting of the movement.

- 1703. Jonathan Edwards born.
- 1704. First American newspaper published at Boston.
- 1704. Deerfield destroyed in Queen Anne's war.
- 1708. Saybrook Platform formulated.
- 1710. Port Royal, Nova Scotia, captured.
- 1719. Edwards graduated from Yale College.
- 1723. Increase Mather died.
- 1727. Edwards ordained at Northampton.
- 1728. Cotton Mather died.
- 1729. Solomon Stoddard died.

Two dominant forces manifested themselves in the development of New England Theology; the attempt to establish Calvinism and the attempt to prove benevolence to be the sum of Virtue. These two aims pervade the entire century of its development, but the first was prominent in the earlier part of the century, or from 1730 to 1760, the second in

the remainder of the century, from 1760 to 1830. These periods may be designated the Calvinistic or Anti-Arminian Period and the Benevolence Period.

- 1731. Edwards preached in Boston on "Man's Dependence."
- 1735. Revival at Northampton, after and with Calvinistic preaching.
- 1738. Edwards' sermons on Justification published, opposition aroused.
- 1740. Whitefield preached in New England.
- 1740. The Great Awakening.
- 1741. Edwards on the Marks of a True Revival.
- 1742. Edwards' Thoughts on the Revival in New England.
- 1743. Chauncy's Thoughts on the state of Religion in New England.
- 1744-49. King George's War; capture of Louisburg, 1745.
- 1744. Mayhew, Experience, published "Grace Defended."
- 1746. Edwards on the Affections published.
- 1749. Briant's sermon commending moral virtues published.
- 1749. Edwards on Qualifications for full Communion.
- 1750. Bellamy's "True Religion Delineated."
- 1751. Edwards removes to Stockbridge.
- 1752. Samuel Niles replied to Briant.
- 1754. Edwards on the "Will."
- 1755. Mayhew, Jonathan, sermons published.
- 1756-63. French and Indian (Seven Years') war.
- 1757. Webster, Samuel, against Original Sin.
- 1758. Death of Edwards, at Princeton, N. J.
- 1758. Edwards' Doctrine of Original Sin.
- 1758. Bellamy's Wisdom of God in the Permission of Sin.
- 1759. Hopkins' Wisdom of God in the Permission of Sin.

The last two works on the permission of sin, form a fit transition from the Anti-Arminian to the Benevolence Period. The permission of sin consistent with the divine benevolence.

- 1759. Quebec taken by Wolfe.
- 1761. Mayhew, Jonathan, sermons on Entering at the Strait Gate.
- 1763. Bellamy. A Blow at the Root of Antinomianism.
- 1765. The Stamp Act.
- 1765. Hopkins' Inquiry into the Promises of the Gospel. Reply to Mayhew.
- 1765. Edwards on Virtue and God's End in Creation published by Hopkins.
- 1767. Mills, Rev. Jedidiah. State of the Unregenerate.
- 1767. Hemmenway, Rev. Moses. Encouragements of the Impenitent.
- 1768. Hopkins. Sermon on the Divinity of Christ.
- 1769. Hopkins. Character of the Unregenerate. Reply to Mills.
- 1769. Bellamy. Dialogue on the Half-way Covenant.
- 1769. Smalley. Natural and Moral Ability.
- 1769. Hart, Rev. William. Dialogue, opposed to the New Divinity.
- 1770. The Boston Massacre.
- 1770. Hopkins. Reply to Hart's Dialogue.
- 1770. Murray, Rev. John, Universalist preacher, came from England.
- 1770 and 1773. Dana, Rev. James. Examination of Edwards on the "Will."
- 1771. Hart. Remarks on Edwards on Virtue.
- 1772. West, Rev. Stephen, D.D. Moral Agency.
- 1772. Hemmenway. Criticism of Hopkins' Reply to Mills.
- 1773. Tea thrown overboard in Boston Harbor.

1773. Hopkins. Nature of True Holiness. Reply to Hemmenway and others.
 1774. Hemmenway. Reply to Hopkins.

Here the strictly Hopkinsian discussions closed, but were, in part, renewed under the name of Taylorism after 1820. After the Revolutionary War the Divine Benevolence as manifested in the pardon of sin, and more indirectly in penalty, came under discussion.

1775. Bunker Hill.
 1776. Independence.
 1777. Surrender of Burgoyne.
 1781. Surrender of Cornwallis.
 1782 and 1784. Chauncy. Salvation of All Men.
 1783. Emmons. Sermon against Universalism.
 1783. Hopkins. The Future State of the Impenitent.
 1785. Edwards, Jonathan, D.D. The Atonement.
 1785. West. The Atonement.
 1786. Smalley. Justification.
 1787. The Constitutional Convention.
 1789. Administration of Washington begins.
 1789. Edwards. The Salvation of All Men Examined.
 1789. Methodist preaching in New Haven, Conn.
 1792 to 1795. Discussion of Terms of Communion, Hemmenway and Emmons.
 1793. Hopkins' System of Divinity.
 1797. Edwards. Liberty and Necessity.
 1803 and 1814. Smalley. Doctrinal sermons.
 1805. Rev. Henry Ware elected Professor of Divinity at Harvard.
 1805. Hopkins' (posthumously published) Dialogue between Calvinist and Semi-Calvinist.
 1808. Andover Seminary founded.
 1810. American Board founded.

The Unitarian discussions from 1810 to 1824 affected New England Theology only indirectly.

- 1819. Channing's Baltimore Sermon.
- 1821. Goodrich, Prof. Lecture on Original Sin.
- 1822. Taylor, Rev. N. W., Professor of Theology at New Haven.
- 1826. Fitch, Prof., preached "Sin Transgression of Known Law."
- 1827. Spring, Gardiner, D.D. Means of Regeneration.
- 1828. Taylor. Concio ad Clerum.
- 1829. Spring's Means of Regeneration reviewed.
- 1829. Tyler's Strictures on the review.
- 1830. Taylor and Tyler discussion.
- 1830. Woods' letter to Dr. Taylor.
- 1832. Hawes' letter to Dr. Taylor.
- 1832. Taylor and Tyler discussion.
- 1834. Theological Institute of Connecticut founded.
- 1834. Oberlin College founded.
- 1837. Presbyterian Church divided into Old and New School.
- 1837. Tyler's letters on New England Arminianism.

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